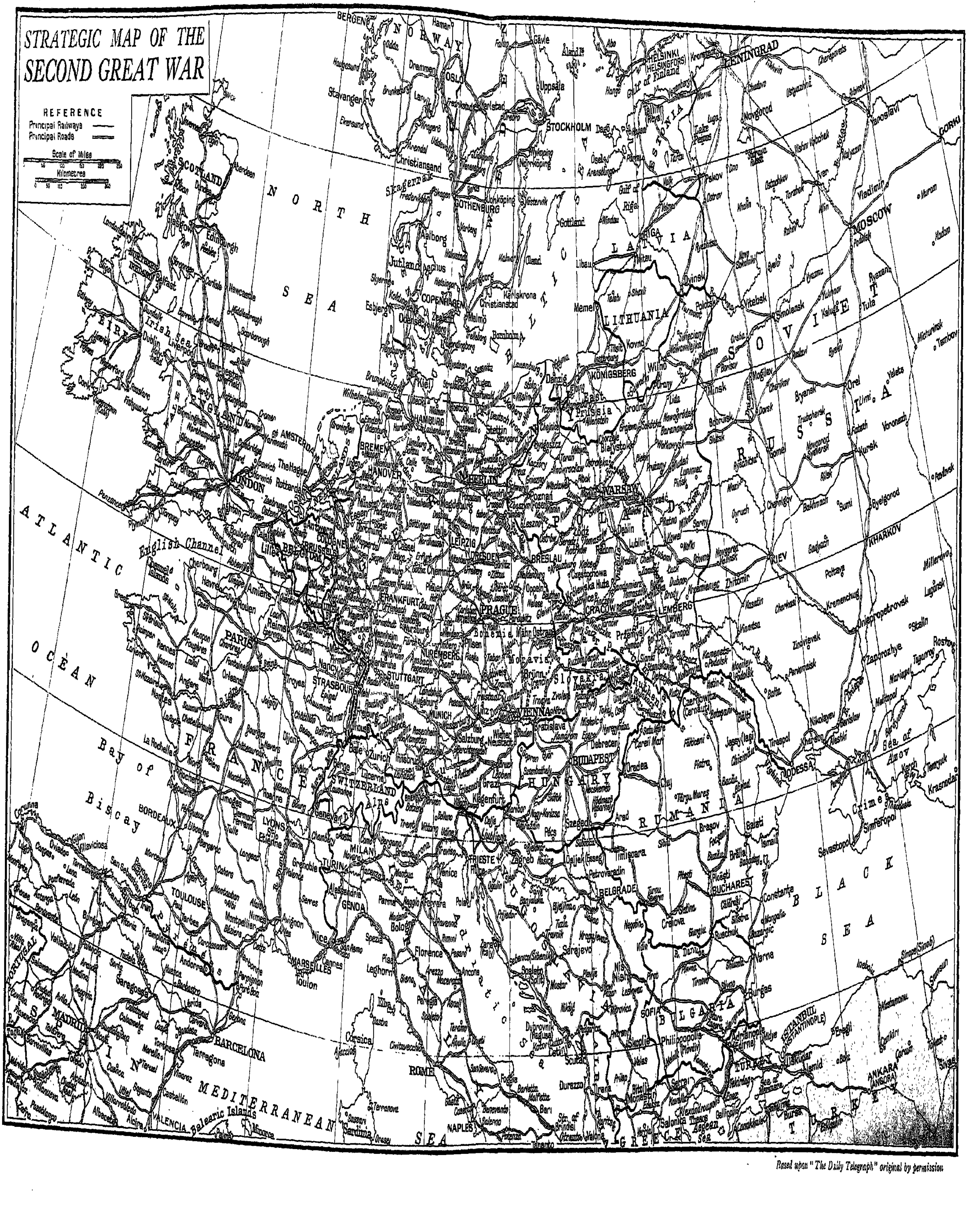
# *THE SECOND GREAT WAR*




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# THE SECOND GREAT WAR

## A Standard History

Edited by

SIR JOHN HAMMERTON

Editor of The Great War, World War 1914-18, Europe's Fight for Freedom, etc

Military Editor

Maj.-Gen. SIR CHARLES GWYNN, K.C.B., D.S.O.

Military Critic of The Daily Telegraph

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## Volume One

Pages 1—400

Published by

THE WAVERLEY BOOK COMPANY LTD.

in association with

THE AMALGAMATED PRESS LTD.

Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

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*Printed in Great Britain by The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., London*

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# THE SECOND GREAT WAR

## *A Standard History*

## INTRODUCTORY

THE present work is designed as a contemporary history of the great conflict of nations forced upon Europe and the world by the aggressive action of the German Government and the "senseless ambition" of its Nazi dictator, the issue and extent of which, at the writing of this introductory note, cannot be foreseen with certitude

OUR plan is to examine and narrate, as briefly as may be consistent with adequate statement, all the factors that led up to the momentous declaration of war on September 3, 1939, so that anyone reading the successive chapters of THE SECOND GREAT WAR should be able to form a proper appreciation of the basic principles at stake, to distinguish "beyond a peradventure" between those who had the will for peace and those whose hearts and minds were set upon war though peace was often on their lips. Furthermore, such a one will possess herein an accurate outline of the vital matters that preceded the German onslaught upon Poland, as well as an authentic and sufficient account of the world-shaking events that happened after September 1, 1939, upon which to form his own judgement of the progress of the war.

EDITORIALLY, Sir Charles Gwynn, the military critic of The Daily Telegraph, and the present writer, whose name is associated with numerous historical and descriptive works on the World War of 1914–18—he edited in collaboration with Mr. H. W. Wilson, the eminent naval and military critic, the thirteen massy volumes of "The Great War"—may fairly claim certain qualifications for the joint task they have here assumed.

THEIR intention is to provide the first authoritative history of the Second Great War, which will derive its value less from its pictorial presentation than from the adequacy and considered nature of its literary content. This is the work of a group of able and well-informed contributors whose qualifications embrace extensive and peculiar knowledge of the full range of subjects involved: recent history, modern politics . . . especially "power politics" . . . and military, naval, and aerial affairs. Of the Editors' success in this direction the pages of their work must be the first and final test. And they are content to leave it at that.

BUT it must not be supposed that in thus emphasizing the importance of the literary side of THE SECOND GREAT WAR, any belittling of the pictorial is implied. Far from it. Great pains have been taken to associate with the literary chapters a selection of pictorial documents which particularly illustrate these chapters, as well as many hundreds of independent duotone plates, that may for generations constitute one of the finest graphic representations of the historic events with which our narrative is concerned. In post-war years these photographic records of actual episodes and personalities of "the killing time" will acquire a new and heightened value.

WHILE in one sense THE SECOND GREAT WAR might be regarded as "official" on its pictorial side, inasmuch as most of its photographic documents have had the imprimatur of the Censor—its publication having begun when that official was very much alert—its Editors have not in any measure felt intimidated or overawed by him either in the expression of opinion and criticism or in the selection of pictorial material for the illustration of their pages. It might also be added that the value of this history is considerably enhanced by the plentiful use of accurate and clearly printed maps.

J. A. H.

### THE SHROUD OF GOLD

A New Poem

by

HUMBERT WOLFE

•

All wars are fought in the spirit. Vain the trust
in the mastery of steel. Like him, who makes it,
this is no more than a fiction of the dust,
which blows on the first wind that overtakes it.
The struggle is in the heart, and they who thrust
for truth unmoved when heaven itself forsakes it
see Liberty—the captain of the just—
bright in the battle-line before he breaks it.
And terrible death itself is here defeated
by stronger weapons than its own, whose might
is bounded by the grave's pretension. They
who fall with freedom are not lost nor cheated,
for they become the essence of the light
which in a shroud of gold lays death away.

*World copyright*



FUEHRER AND FANATICS AT A SECRET SESSION

It was in the hot, smoky back room of a little Munich beer cellar that the Nazi movement was born. This striking picture—a painting by one of Hitler's followers of those early days in the 1920's—shows the Leader venting his oratory on the patient band of his early apostles. The picture is unknown in Germany; Hitler banned it, possibly because it is "degenerate art."

Chapter 1

# THE FORCES AND FACTORS THAT MADE FOR WAR

*Dictatorship v. Democracy: The Age-long Contest—Post-War Liberalism—Mussolini and the Rise of Fascism—The Weimar Republic—Bruning—Birth of Nazism—Hitler Attains Power—League Defied—Rhineland Occupied—Germany Arms Again—Engulfment of Austria—The Rape of Czechoslovakia—Threat to Poland—Preparation for the Lightning Stroke*

TURNING the pages of newspapers, reading what "Our Correspondent" in Berlin has to say, and then his brother in Moscow, listening to the voices which come to us over the wireless, giving an ear now and again to the rumours whispered in the train or across the dinner-table, we may well be excused if we find the situation filled with confusion and altogether baffling in its complexity. Only when we rise above the babble of the moment and strive to breathe the purer air of calm reflection can we detect behind the shifting phantasmagoria the clear outlines of a principle which we may hold and cherish. Boundaries, acts, frontier incidents, speeches and pronouncements of every kind—these belong to the world of change, and change indeed from day to day, even from hour to hour. Not on these things do the most vital moves of the political chessboard depend for their origin and inspiration. If we seek that guiding principle we shall find it in the conflict which endures today as it has endured through all the centuries of human history, between the belief in dictatorship and the belief in democracy.

Neither the one nor the other is a newcomer to the field of political speculation 2,500 years ago the Greeks submitted themselves to the rule of dictators, and then, tired of the yoke, changed over to democracy of the most advanced type. The Roman system was nominally a democracy with a dictatorial core. During the Middle Ages history records flourishing democratic states, existing side by side with the dictatorship of Emperor and Pope. In the modern world we still have a conflict between the principles of the French Revolution of 1789 and those of the Fascist and Bolshevik Revolutions of our own day.

**Democracy v. Dictatorship**

For thousands of years, then, the battle has been engaged. Now one system and now the other has won the mastery, but on every occasion complete victory has been denied. There seems to be something in the human spirit which revolts against the too long continued domination of one personality, however great; at the same time it must be admitted that history points to many occasions when men have gladly abandoned their most cherished individual rights in favour of the rule of a strong man who promised a way out from the menacing situation of the moment.



THE PATH TO POWER

This photograph was taken at Gera, on September 6, 1931, after the Nazis had won power in the Thuringia government. Following Hitler is Captain Roehm, then leader of the S.A. (Brownshirts).

*Wide World*

When the Great War ended in 1919 it seemed as if democracy had won its last and greatest triumph—a triumph which apparently bore all the seeds of permanence. Countries which had been subjected to autocratic rule had crashed in hopeless ruin, while others in which democracy had been the guiding principle had endured to the end and won the most complete victory. The War had been widely advertised by the Allies as a struggle between Democracy and Autocracy, and with the coming of peace there was a rush on the part of the defeated to reproduce within their own borders those democratic institutions which apparently were the prerequisites of victory. Germany kicked Kaiserism into the gutter, and at Weimar proclaimed a constitution of the most extraordinary liberality. The Succession States which emerged from the débris of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, together with re-born Poland, enlarged Rumania, and the congeries of Baltic states, all hastened to provide themselves with parliaments, presidents, cabinets and parties on the approved lines of democratic parliamentarianism.

If parliaments spell democracy, then democracy had never seemed so assured of its future as in 1919. Victors and vanquished alike paid tribute to its virtues in word and in deed.

Years passed, and the rhythmic alternation referred to above became once more in evidence. Parliamentarianism had reached the crest of its wave; ere long it was half engulfed in the trough. To change the metaphor, the first break in the democratic façade came in Italy, which, although nominally one of the victorious powers, was bitterly disappointed with her share of the material fruits of the struggle. For years past parliamentary government in Italy had been almost a synonym for corruption and inefficiency, and after the War its defects became too blatant to be endured. In 1922 a militant journalist, Benito Mussolini, at the head of a private army of black-shirted Fascists, gave a push to the rotting fabric which sent it toppling to the ground. As the saviour of public order he was granted the premiership, and in due course proceeded with a programme of complete regimentation of the Italian people. By skilful manipulation the Italian parliament became of less and less importance, until it emerged as the sounding-board of ministerial opinion. In the realm of economics the foundations were laid of a system in which masters and men are grouped in corporations under the control of the "Corporative State."

**Italy adopts Fascism**

dictator, Il Duce Mussolini himself in whose hands were grasped all the reins of power He was Caesar in all but name and his interest in the imperial tradition was evidenced at once by his care for the recovery of relics of ancient Rome and for the creation of an empire not unworthy to be compared with that *of Augustus* and the Antonines

Just as Fascism was born out of, or was at least fertilized by, the disappointment and disillusionment of the post-War period, so German Nazism may be traced back to the aftermath of the same great struggle The prouder a nation, the greater her humiliation in the hour of defeat It was a bitter cup which the Weimar Republic had to taste in those first years of its existence The Rhineland was in the occupation of the Allies an immense, indeed, an impossibly large, sum was demanded by way of reparations for the damage and loss inflicted in the course of the War for six months after the Armistice the blockade was maintained with disastrous effects on the lives and health of the German people, the value of the mark dwindled into nothingness, and with the collapse of the currency there collapsed, too, the standard of life of the great majority of the people Unemployment, moreover, was rampant, thousands of ex-servicemen were without jobs, in the political sphere men who only yesterday were insignificant nobodies now lorded it over those who by birth and prestige regarded themselves as belonging to the elect

In retrospect it cannot but be admitted that those at the helm of the Republic did their best to make good in an increasingly difficult situation When the Allied troops were withdrawn from the Rhineland, when the currency was rehabilitated when Germany under the wise guidance of Stresemann, entered the League of Nations and added her signature to the Pact of Locarno—the clouds seemed to lift above the country's future, but in 1930 Germany, a financial satellite of the United States, was caught in the economic blizzard which had already devastated America Deprived of the funds which had enabled her industrial system to function, the Republic staggered beneath the load of reparations and was rent afresh by the feuds of internal factions Gradually, by force of circumstance, the liberal system of government was abrogated and under the chancellorship of Bruning a dictatorship in all but name took its place

Then it was that the world became conscious of the menace that lay in the personality of one who had been hitherto derided as but a noisy agitator In ten years Hitler had become the focus of all that was dissatisfied and disillusioned in the German state First to a handful, then to hundreds, then to thousands, and so at last to millions of the German people he became a symbol He was just a plain ex-serviceman who, like millions of others, had found it hard to make a living in the post War years Gradually he had overcome obstacle after obstacle he had framed a programme founded a party, taken part in an armed revolt, spent months in a prison-cell where he had penned a book which might well become the evangel of a reawakened people And as the German public watched him grow from strength to strength they felt that they, too, were growing with him As he came to the fore in his own country they felt that he might well be the leader who would win back for Germany her place in the sun In 1921 the party of which he was the head had 32 seats in the Reichstag, eight years later they captured 230 seats with thirteen million votes On January 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler—the Austrian who once had been a casual labourer, a house-painter—became Chancellor of the German Reich

Looking back on the events of the six years that followed, it must be admitted that the Chancellor pursued a bold policy with the most striking success First he prepared the way for Germany's *revanche* in secret, then, when his preparations had reached an







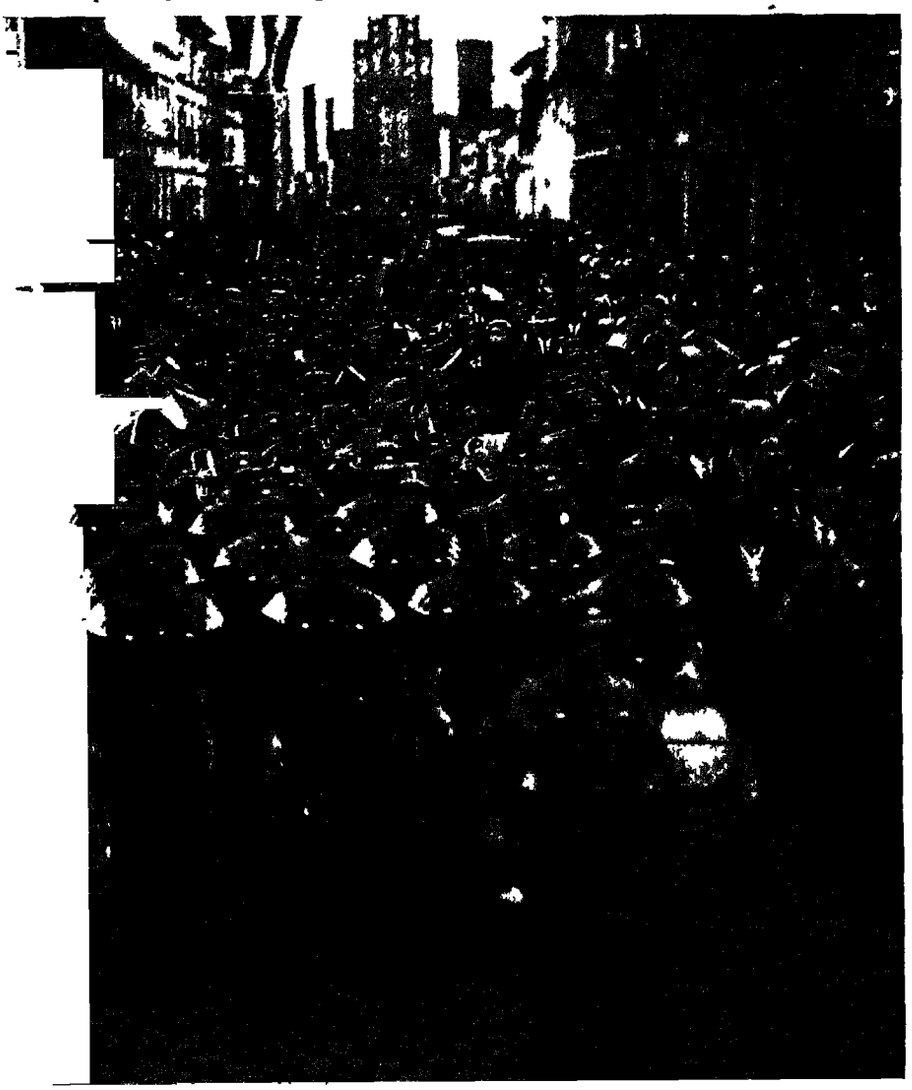
**WHEN HITLER SERVED ON THE WESTERN FRONT**

**Hitler is today one of the most photographed men in the world, but there are few photographs extant of the Fuehrer in his early days Above (with spiked helmet), he is seen when a Lance-Corporal in the 16th Regt of Bavarian (Reserve) Infantry Bottom, right, with a comrade in 1916 In the circle, as a young man of 25 in a Munich crowd on August 3, 1914**

advanced stage, he was able to throw off the disguise and an astounded world found itself face to face with a Germany which refused any longer to be bound by the shackles of Versailles The Saar was returned to the Reich with the consent of the democracies, but the occupation of the Rhineland by German armed forces was a distinct and direct challenge which many in later years regretted that the Allies had not instantly taken up An air force, the foundations of which had been laid in conditions of the greatest secrecy, was openly expanded, and all the factories of the Reich were speeded up to produce 'planes and guns and war material of one kind and another Conscription, which had been definitely forbidden by the treaty makers in 1919, was reintroduced, and Germany could once again boast an army

As the months passed Germany presented an ever bolder face to the world, and when she allied herself with Italy, and later with Japan, it was seen that the democracies might soon be confronted with a definite challenge to their supremacy The challenge came in 1938





**LEADERS AND LED**

Above, President Hindenburg is seen seated between Hitler and Goering at the Tannenberg commemoration in 1933 Hitler had that year become Reich chancellor, and Goering was Prussian premier. Below, left, a body of Brownshirts is seen parading in Neubrandenburg in October 1930

*Wide World and Associated Press*

when the Fuehrer staked a claim for the return of the Germans outside the borders of the Reich In March Austria was overrun by German troops and constituted a province of Greater Germany No greater affront to the complacency of the Allies could well be imagined, for the union of Austria and Germany had been definitely banned time after time

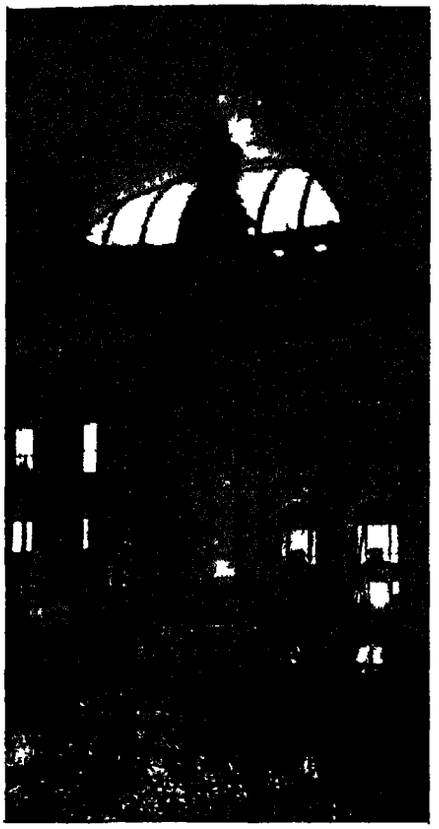
Czechoslovakia was the next to experience the weight of his attack—an attack in which the first line was a vigorously directed campaign of propaganda of the most unscrupulous form Hitler extended his protection to the Germans of the Sudetenland, and following his agitation Europe and the world were on the verge of war in September, 1938, when, as the result of the efforts of Mr Chamberlain, supported by President Roosevelt and Signor Mussolini, the partial dismemberment of Czechoslovakia was agreed upon With this bloodless victory the Fuehrer professed himself content, but early in 1939 the machinery of intimidation was once again set in motion, and a year after the engulfment of Austria, the bulk of what the "men of Munich" had left of Czechoslovakia followed suit. Though they still possessed nominal

independence, Moravia and Bohemia were in effect annexed to the Reich

More months passed—months of tremendous military and economic preparations on all sides Germany it was seen was girding up her loins for yet another onslaught—perchance on Rumania, or possibly it might be on Poland By now however, the democracies were awake, and under the firm leadership of Britain a new peace front was organized Abandoning her traditional policy of isolation from the political affairs of the Continent, Great Britain threw the mantle of her protection over Poland, and entered into similar offensive and defensive alliances with Greece and Turkey

At the same time efforts were made to conclude a pact with Soviet Russia—a pact which was prevented at the last moment by the most complete reorientation of German policy Having for years denounced the Bolsheviks as enemies of civilization, having evolved an ideology for the Nazi party in which hostility to Bolshevism and Communism was the guiding principle, Herr Hitler now completed a *volte-face* almost without precedent in history The execution of such a complete reversal of policy was at once a sign of German adaptability and of the growing strength of the democratic opposition to the German menace

The conclusion of the German-Soviet Pact might be held to justify the view of those who maintain that Nazism and Bolshevism are not the incompatibles which they usually have been alleged to be, but are on the contrary systems with many essential resemblances It is true



A FLAMING FRAUD

The firing of the Reichstag in 1933 was attributed to the Communists but, it is certain, was due to Nazi instigation In those flames German freedom died, for they helped to sweep Nazidom into power.

*Wide World*



'BLOOD FLAG' OF THE MUNICH 'MARTYRS'

In the early, more dramatic and theatrical days of the Nazi party, a new party flag was always inaugurated by touching it with the so-called "blood flag" carried in the 1923 Munich Putsch In the above photograph Hitler is seen at such a ceremony in 1931.

that in the course of years the Soviet system assumed many appendages of a democratic nature, but it might well be supposed that Stalin was no more hampered by democratic forms than the Fuehrer or the Duce In Russia, as in Germany and Italy, there is one party and one party only in the State It is true that it goes by a different name, but it is none the less a concrete expression of totalitarianism in action Apologists for the Communist regime urge that the ends envisaged in the Soviet theory are very different from those which are the inspiration of Nazism or Fascism Most men, however, prefer to judge a system by its fruits rather than by its professions, and when we see in Russia, as in Germany and Italy, a controlled press, a single party monopolizing all the offices of the state, and at the head of the State one man holding in his hands all the reins of power, we may well be excused from paying too much attention to the claim that in Russia these things are done in the name of the proletariat Dictatorship, wherever it is and whatever its aims, is still dictatorship

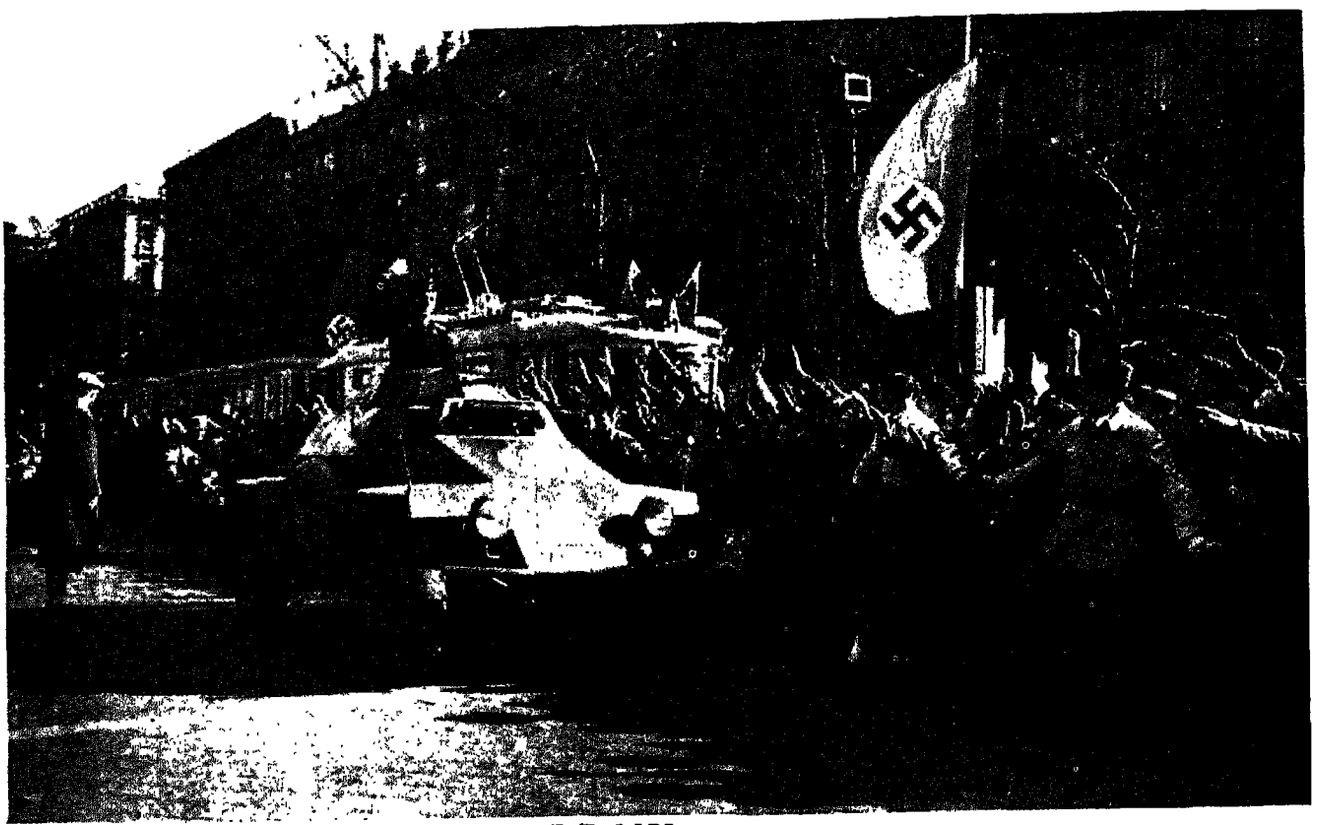
Fascism, Nazism, and Communism are all expressions of twentieth century



Associated Press

GERMANY'S LEGIONS ONCE MORE IN COLOGNE

On March 7, 1936 Hitler struck his first defiant blow at the Treaty of Versailles by marching his troops into the demilitarized zones of the Rhineland Against the advice of many of his military chiefs, he determined to force the issue—and won Above, German infantry are seen marching through the Domplatz in Cologne where, not many years before, British troops were the only soldiers



VIENNA'S WELCOME TO NAZI TROOPS

Though the supporters of the Schuschnigg regime were bitterly opposed to the incorporation of their country with the German Reich, there is no doubt that many of the people were at that time genuinely pleased by the Anschluss. At all events, the onlookers in the photograph above are welcoming in no uncertain manner the first German troops to enter Vienna—an imperial city which, for twenty years, had been bereft of its empire.

*Mondiale*

dictatorship, but besides Italy, Germany, and Russia there are many other countries now subject to dictatorial rule.

For some years, indeed, it might seem that dictatorship was gaining in the fight with democracy. In our own country, as in France and America, many have urged that there is something in a dictatorship, representing a greater or lesser degree of state control, which is much more suited to the conditions of the modern world than are the institutions of parliamentary democracy. Many who have knowledge of the working of the parliamentary machine complain of its cumbrous and creaky nature. How much easier it is for a dictator to effect a reform than it is for a reform bill to be passed through the House of Commons! It must be pointed out, however, that dictators, like doctors, bury their own mistakes. Human nature being what it is, we cannot but believe that in the dictator countries there are innumerable instances of inefficiency, of corruption, of maladjustment, that in a democratic state would give rise to a howl of condemnation and an outburst of public indignation on a huge scale.

**Democracy Really Works!**

The strongest argument, however, in favour of democracy as a system of government is that it has actually lasted for many centuries at a time and has weathered innumerable storms. As Walter Bagehot said of that extraordinary undefinable and non-existent something, the English Constitution, it *works!*

It should never be forgotten both by the partisans of dictatorship and by its critics, that it has never yet stood up against a test of the most serious and exhaustive kind. Parliamentary government in England has existed in more or less its present form for nearly seven hundred years, and it has successfully resisted war and civil war, revolution and counter-revolution. Today, it is true, the machine creaks, but there is not the slightest evidence of its breaking down. During its last great time of testing in the course of the Great War it functioned admirably, and no vital change was found to be necessary in its machinery. As the expression of public opinion, as the ventilator of grievances, as the controller of the public purse, the House of Commons is without an effective rival.

Dictatorships, on the other hand, in their modern shape are comparatively young. There have been many dictatorships in the past, but none has endured more than a few decades. Sooner or later the ordinary man resents his position as a mere cog in the state machine, and asserts the supreme importance of himself and his fellow individuals. Dictatorships are the fruit of disillusionment, defeat, and despair. They may dispel the disillusion, solace the defeats, give new hope to the despairing. But hitherto they have never proved themselves to be long-enduring features in the political scene. They are means, very effective means, to an end; when that end has been accomplished it has always been found that other ends require other means.

**Ephemeral Dictatorship**

Until 1939 no modern dictator had had to face a war on a grand scale; no modern system of dictatorship had had to meet such a challenge as the Great War made to the democratic system of Western Europe in 1914. We cannot tell, though some may suspect, what will happen to a thoroughly regimented people when subjected to the devastating and nerve-destroying ordeal of modern war. In moments of crisis it is the individual who counts; and what if the individual has been so well controlled that he has lost all sense of his individual responsibility?









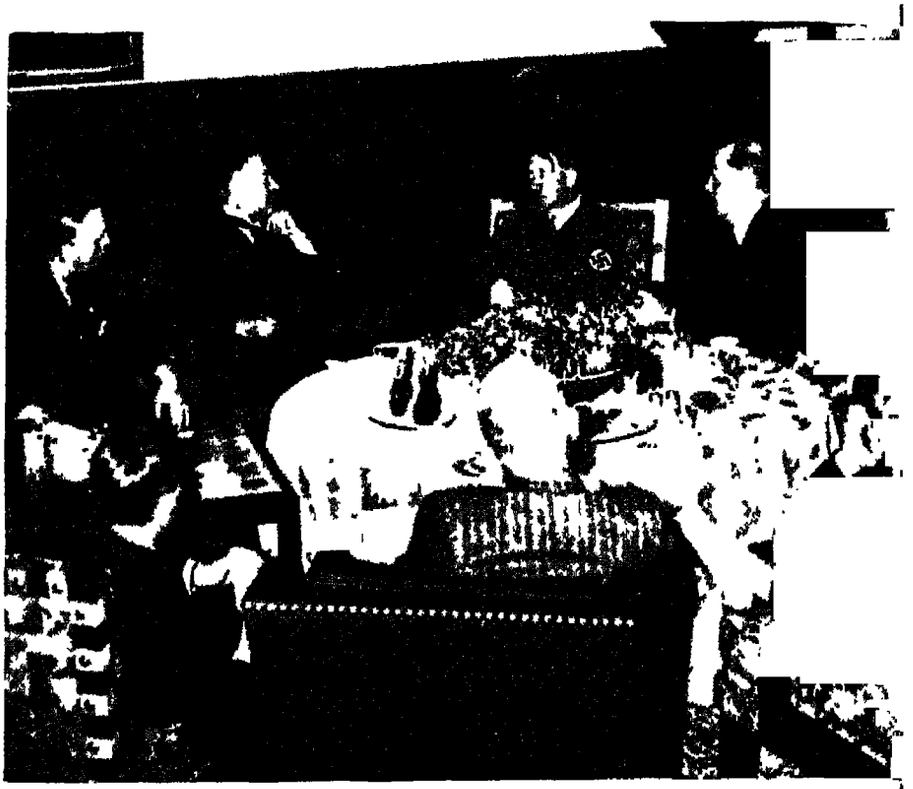
**'EIN FUEHRER'—IN VARIED MOODS**

1, shows Hitler in contemplative pose in the prison at Landsberg-am-Lech, where he wrote part of *Mein Kampf*. 2, depicts him in pugnacious mood at the beginning of his political career. 3, a benign Hitler is seen in company with President Hindenburg and the latter's grandchildren, while 4, shows still another Hitler, the summit of power attained, at his most austere and disdainful.

In the Great War it was often remarked that the German troops fought with the utmost bravery and determination when they marched shoulder to shoulder and were sent over the top in mass formation. Their superiority, however, was by no means so manifest when it came to a question of open fighting in which little groups were left in the air, as it were, to fight their own battles, and to play a worthy part in a struggle which had quite escaped from the control of the gentlemen of the staff. It has been claimed that the well-regimented Germans would never have been able to withstand the shock of the great offensive of March, 1918. But the British not only made a stand when their front was broken, but turned at the vital hour to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

It is just here in the varying emphasis laid upon the individual that we reach the heart of the difference between dictatorship and democracy.

Under a dictatorship the individual man or woman exists for the State, whereas in democratic countries the State exists to advance the welfare, and to protect the interests, of the individual citizen.





BIRTH OF ANOTHER 'SCRAP OF PAPER' *Wide World*

**While most of the Nazi leaders have invested their money abroad, Hitler has spent much of his on his magnificent châlet at Berchtesgaden, in the Bavarian Alps, and the top photograph shows the Fuehrer taking tea there with Mr. Chamberlain during the Munich conversations of 1938. In the lower picture are seen the "Big Four," met together at Munich. From left to right: Mr. Chamberlain, M. Daladier, Herr Hitler, and Signor Mussolini. Behind the Fuehrer is Herr von Ribbentrop, who is also seen on the extreme left of the upper photograph.**

At the very root of democracy is the belief that human beings, though not born equal, have an equal right to happiness; today, as when they were pronounced, the "Rights of Man" declared in 1776 and 1789 still ring true.

To a dictator men are valuable, not man—unless he happens to be the Fuehrer or the Duce or the Secretary-General of the Communist Party. There must be men, of course, to hold the rifles, to drive the tanks, to sit behind the machine-guns, to guide the aeroplanes and drop the bombs; but the activities of the military machine, as of the social and economic system, are set in motion not to promote the welfare of the common citizen, but for the greater glory of that new god of the twentieth century—the Totalitarian State.

When, therefore, we set out to weigh the respective chances of dictatorship and democracy, we must have regard to something more than the numbers enrolled in the armed forces, the quantity of war material, the 'planes and tanks and guns. We must remember those imponderables of which the human spirit is the most important. And what can nerve the human spirit to suffer, to endure, to press on through disappointment and defeat until victory is secure, better than the belief that however insignificant his status, however small and weak his contribution to the common purpose, the individual nevertheless *counts*?

Chapter 2

# DANZIG: EXCUSE FOR AGGRESSION

*Vicissitudes of Danzig—Re-establishment of the Free City—The Polish Corridor—Poles Create Port of Gdynia—Danzig Dissentients—Establishment of Danzig Nazi Party—Arnold Forster's Campaign of Pin-pricks and Insults—Nazis Dominate the Free City—Propaganda for Incorporation in the Reich—Tension Grows—Germany Invades Corridor*

In 1914 Europe and ultimately the world were plunged into war because of a terrorist's bullet in the Balkans. In 1939 war came again to the world because the people of Danzig were resolved to rejoin the Reich. Perhaps the one statement is as true as the other, though of a certainty neither is the whole truth. Nevertheless, the murder of the Austrian Archduke was the spark that set fire to the powder-barrel in 1914: and in 1939 the proclamation that Danzig had "returned home" meant that Hitler's Germany had decided to appeal to the arbitrament of the sword in its quarrel with Poland and with Poland's allies.

**Danzig in History**

Danzig has never been long absent from the pages of history. Situated at the mouth of the Vistula, it occupies a position of great economic importance, and apart from the fact that the Romans had a settlement in the neighbourhood, the place has been a centre of human intercourse for nearly a thousand years. Danes, Pomeranians, Prussians, Brandenburgers and Poles struggled for its possession, and from 1308 to 1454 it was the prosperous settlement of that famed medieval order the Teutonic Knights. When the power and discipline of the Knights declined, Danzig shook off their yoke and became part of Polish territory. Though nominally subject, however, it enjoyed *the status and all the rights of a Free City*: in fact, it was the head of a territory comprising some thirty townships. At this time it was also a member of the Hanseatic League, that combination of North European trading cities which for long constituted what was in fact a commercial empire. With the coming of the modern age it entered a period of troubled history, and in the wars between the Russians, the German states and Poland in the 17th and 18th centuries, it suffered severely. When in 1772 Russia, Austria and Prussia descended like imperial birds of prey on the body of Poland, then sorely stricken by internal feuds, Danzig was separated from Poland, and in 1793 during the Second Partition it was definitely allotted to Prussia. For a short time it was a dukedom, but in 1814 it was returned to Prussia, and it was the capital of West Prussia until 1919.

At Versailles Danzig's future again came under review, and it was resolved that the ancient Free City should be re-established under the protection of the League of Nations, primarily with a view to providing the newly restored state of Poland with control of the mouth of the river on which its life chiefly depended.

By the end of 1920 the new order had been established. Politically, the Free City enjoyed complete self-government, but, economically, it was closely linked with its great neighbour; Poland and Danzig formed a single customs



**DRUMS BEAT IN DANZIG**

Danzig was always a German city; so-called Polish suppression of hapless Germar could never be true there, at least, where a Nazi senate has long governed a Nazi — the streets have re-echoed ever since 1933 to the beat of the Brownshirts' drum interminably parading feet, and the strains of the monotonous

*Photo, Paul Popper*



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**ON YOUR RIGHT POLAND—ON YOUR LEFT GERMANY**

**In Upper Silesia, where Germany and Poland met, the boundary line as drawn by the Versailles Treaty and the post-plebiscite committee played some strange tricks with the population. Above, a boundary stone stands in the middle of the pavement in a working-class neighbourhood in a town in the midst of the Silesian coalfield.**

*Photo, Wide World*

territory, Poland enjoying special privileges in the port and controlling the foreign relations of the little state.

Adjoining the free territory of Danzig is the province of Pomorze, the so-called Polish Corridor. History books talk of it as Pomerania, i.e. "along the sea"; it consists of Eastern Pomerania, which lies west of the Vistula, and the territory of Kulm, which lies on the eastern bank of the great river. Seized by Prussia in the First Partition of Poland in 1772, the region remained Polish even during those years of the 19th century when all the efforts of the Prussian governing machine were directed towards the eradication of everything that savoured of Polish national sentiment. Despite the German rule of over 140 years, the great majority of the population were still Poles in race, culture and language when, in 1919, the treaty makers at Versailles decreed that this portion of the German state should be restored to Poland. The action could be justified on racial and linguistic grounds, but another reason was the need for providing Poland with an outlet to the sea.

It was early in 1920 that the first High Commissioner came to reside in Danzig and Poland took formal possession of the Polish Corridor. The rulers of the resuscitated Poland were well aware of Danzig's present importance, but the fact could not be hid that it was predominantly German. Rather than have to rely completely on a port which, if not actually anti-Polish, was at least un-Polish, the authorities in Warsaw decided upon the creation of an entirely new port on the Baltic coast of the Corridor, north-west of Danzig. The site they chose was Gdynia, and in the course of a few years what was then an



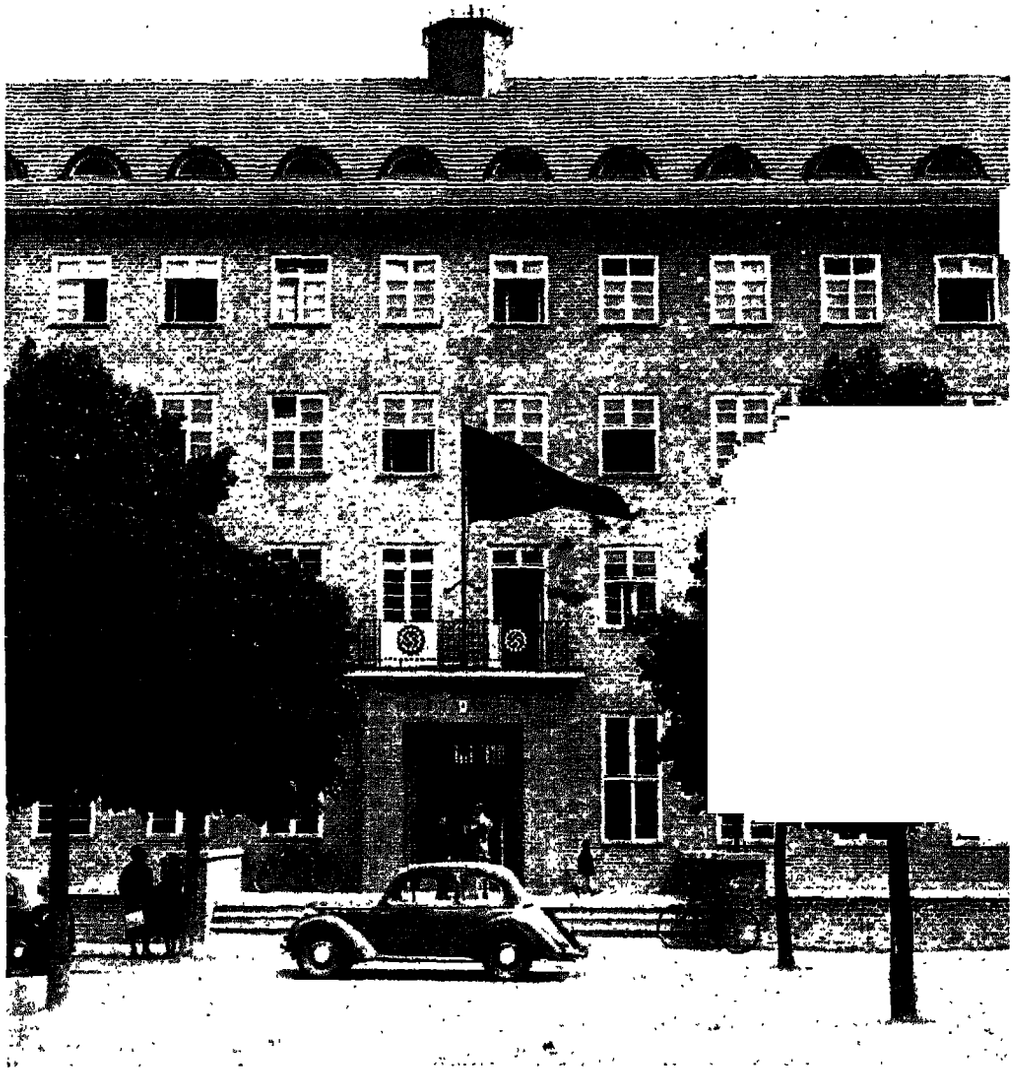
**THE REAL ROOT OF THE TROUBLE**

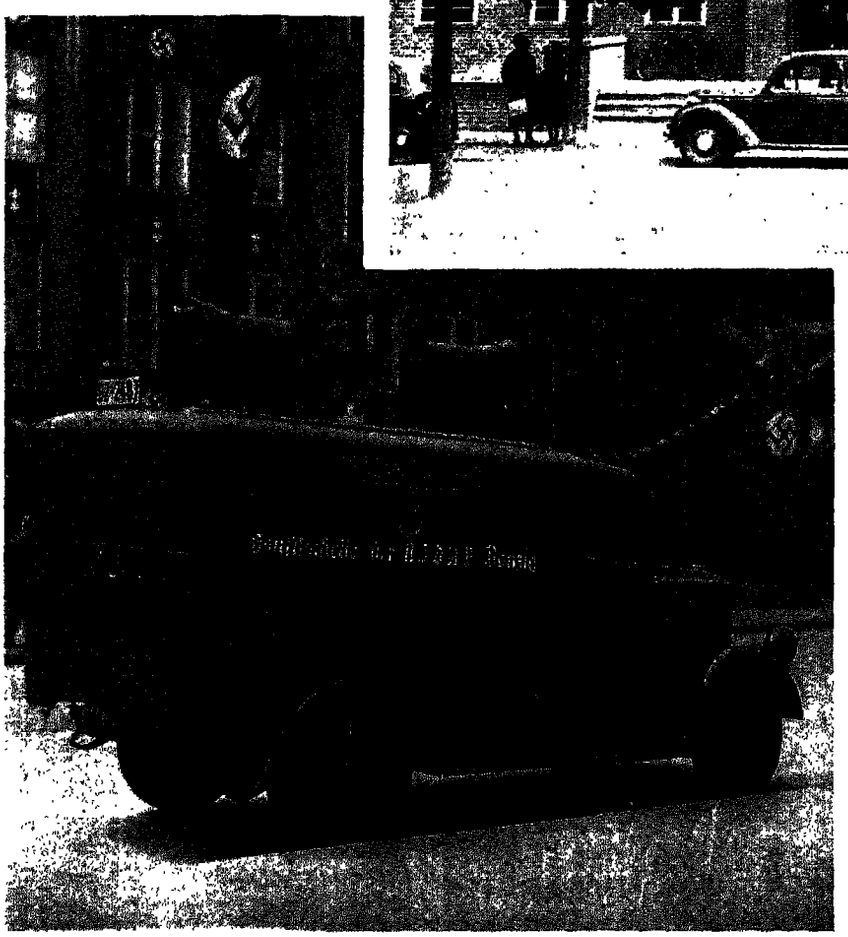
**It was not so much Danzig as Gdynia (below), Poland's own Corridor port, that worried the Germans, for the latter was taking trade that previously went through the former port. Another thorn in the Nazi side was Poland's fortified zone on the Westerplatte which dominated Danzig; a barbed wire entanglement there, used in its defence in 1939, is seen right**

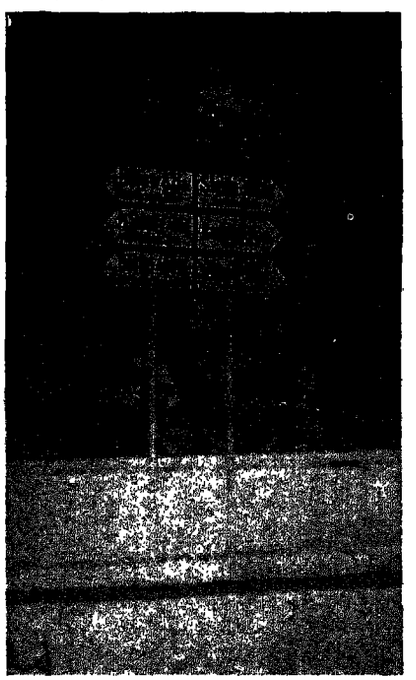
*Photos, Keystone and Wide World*











**SWASTIKA DOMINATES THE FREE CITY**

The only freedom left in the Free City of Danzig was the freedom to be a Nazi. Everywhere swastikas flew: over the traffic policeman, over the magnificent Party Headquarters (top right), over the propaganda-van that blared out, day after day, the Nazi philosophy. Even the signposts point only to German towns, Poland being ignored, officially. And these pictures were not taken after the invasion of Poland, but years before—proof that Danzig always had been free—to Germans.

*Photos, Keystone*



**NAZI GAULEITER**

**A name that became all too familiar during the Danzig agitation was that of Albert Forster, the Nazi district leader in that city. He stirred up anti-Polish feeling even among the most apathetic of Danzigers.**

*Keystone*

insignificant fishing village developed into one of the great ports of Europe.

While Poland was struggling with internal difficulties and with foreign foes, both Gdynia and Danzig advanced in wealth and importance. By 1932 two-thirds of all Poland's trade went by the sea routes commanded by the two ports. So considerable was Poland's overseas trade, indeed, that there was room for both the old port and the new; and, despite the spectacular rise of Gdynia, Danzig's trade was soon far in excess of what it had been when it was part of the Kaiser's realm. Nevertheless, there was rivalry between Danzig and Gdynia; there was friction between the Poles and the Danzigers, and, of course, with the latter's German supporters, from the very commencement of the new order.

Germany regarded the loss of the Corridor and of Danzig as an unstaunched wound in her side, and as the years passed there were innumerable clashes over economic and political issues. There was trouble, for instance, over the partial confiscation of the estates of German landowners in the Corridor—a measure carried out in accordance with the new Polish land laws aiming at the improvement of the status of the peasants—and there was resentment at Poland's decision to erect a munitions dump or naval base at Westerplatte, and at the claims put forward on behalf of Polish customs officers and postal officials in the territory. For years Danzig and the Corridor were permanent items in the agenda of the League of Nations at Geneva, and it became a matter of principle for the successive German governments to champion the "rights" of the allegedly suppressed Germans who had been cut off from the Fatherland by the Versailles "Diktat."

When Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933 there was a distinct improvement in the relations between the Reich and Poland, resulting from the Fuehrer's Ten-year Treaty with Poland of January 26, 1934. In Danzig, however, the voice of the dissentients against League rule became ever more loud. A Nazi party was established, and it was not long before it had completely captured the political machine and was working it on the totalitarian model.



**POLISH COMMISSIONER**

**The function of "protester-in-chief" seemed to be assigned to M. Chodacki, the Polish Danzig Commissioner (above), and more than once his intervention caused the withdrawal of anti-Polish measures.**

*Camera Talks*



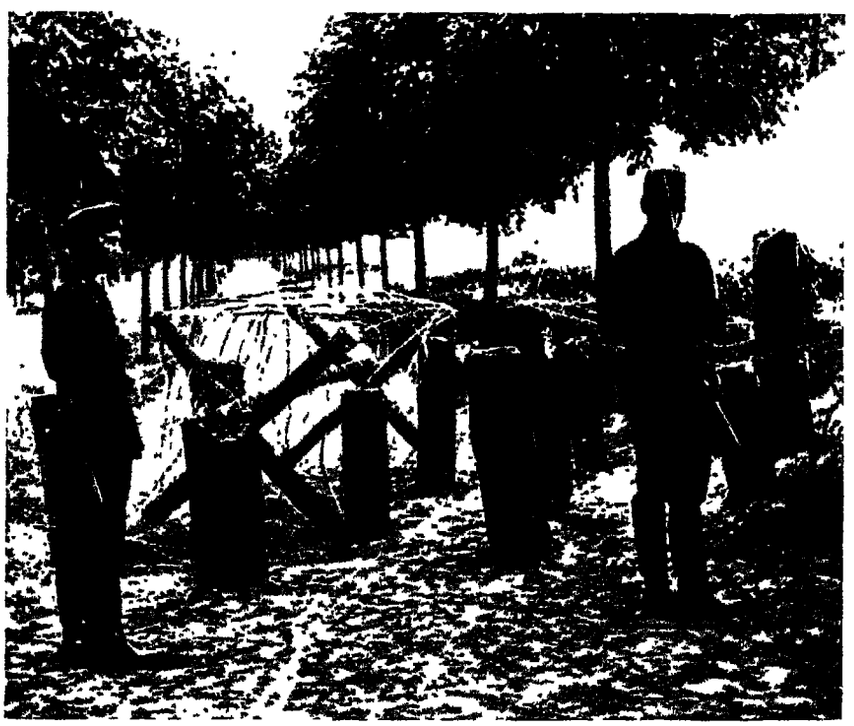
**DANZIG'S SENATE IN SESSION** *Keystone*

**The third prominent figure in Danzig before the war broke out was Herr Greiser, President of the Senate. In this photograph he is seen addressing the Senate—an all-German, all-Nazi body, which certainly could not complain of "Polish domination."**

**Nazification of Danzig**

However friendly he might wish to be with Poland, Hitler never disguised his sympathies with the Germans of Danzig and to a lesser degree with those occupying the Corridor. The Danzig Nazis, under the leadership of Albert Förster, by a combination of pin-pricks and insults made the position of the High Commissioner unbearable, and as soon as they achieved a majority in the Diet they subjected all the non-Nazi elements to a system of organized repression. A stream of inspired Nazi propaganda was poured out in favour of the city's reunion with the Reich. All who favoured the democratic regime, or who advocated an understanding between the two peoples, were silenced by the brutal arguments usually employed by the Nazis—prison and the concentration camp, the cudgel and the assassin's bullet. The Jews—the merchants and bankers who had always played so large a part in the city's life and on whose talent its prosperity was so largely grounded—were driven out and plundered. Hitler's henchmen forced their way into every public office, and





LOOKING FOR THE NON-EXISTENT ENEMY

**The hollowness of the Danzig pretext for war against Poland was apparent to everyone—except the Danzigers. All the panoply of Nazidom was called into play there—Labour Corps parades (as at the top) and "lynx-eyed frontier guards watching over Danzig's liberty" (immediately above)—to aid in the deception; though where their Labour Corps was to dig and whom the guards were watching for no one really knew.**

*Wide World; Keystone*

when in 1936 Arthur Greiser, the Nazi President of the Danzig Senate, was summoned to account by the League of Nations, he made a defiant speech at Geneva demanding the end of the League control.

By the end of 1937 the Free City was completely in the hands of the Nazis, and early in the next year Förster declared that Berlin had resumed control of the city's foreign policy. Poland could do little to stem the Nazi tide. During 1938 it was understood that in return for certain economic concessions Poland was prepared to abandon her political claims, but in the autumn the position worsened following upon Förster's declaration that "the Germans in Danzig would soon be rewarded for their suffering just as the Germans in Austria and the Sudetenland had been rewarded." By the close of the year Danzig's reincorporation in the Reich had become a matter of immediate political interest.

Towards the end of July, 1939, it was announced that the Danzig police force had been increased from 1,500 to nearly 4,000 men owing to the "necessity for protecting Danzig from the Polish army," and tension between Poland and Danzig was further aggravated by the dismissal of Polish workmen in the shipyards, interference with the rights and functions of Polish customs officials, and, finally, the shooting of one of the latter by Nazi storm troopers.

As the days passed the tension grew. From Warsaw there came a statement that if the Germans insisted on realizing their plan of incorporating Danzig in the Reich, then Poland would be forced to resort to arms, knowing that she was fighting for her own independence.

July passed into August, and it became increasingly apparent that Herr Hitler was contemplating yet another of those aggressive actions against neighbouring states which in the past had proved so successful. Confronted by the possibility of a European, and possibly a world war, the statesmen of the powers strove unceasingly for peace. It was not to be, however.

On September 1 Herr Hitler's troops entered the Corridor, and on that morning Förster announced to the Danzigers that "the hour for which you have been longing for twenty years has come. This day Danzig has returned to the great German Reich."

## *Historic Documents. I.*

# *BRITAIN'S LAST EFFORTS TO AVERT WAR*

In this, the first of a series comprising the most important speeches, communications, statements and other documents relating to the Second Great War, are included extracts from the exchanges between London and Berlin during the ten days which ended with Germany's invasion of Poland.

FOLLOWING the publication of the news that Herr von Ribbentrop was proceeding to Moscow to sign a non-aggression pact with the U.S.S.R., Mr. Chamberlain wrote to Herr Hitler (August 22, 1939):

... Whatever may prove to be the nature of the German-Soviet Agreement, it cannot alter Great Britain's obligation to Poland which his Majesty's Government have stated in public repeatedly and plainly, and which they are determined to fulfil.

It has been alleged that, if his Majesty's Government had made their position more clear in 1914, the great catastrophe would have been avoided. Whether or not there is any force in that allegation, his Majesty's Government are resolved that on this occasion there shall be no such tragic misunderstanding.

If the case should arise, they are resolved, and prepared, to employ without delay all the forces at their command, and it is impossible to foresee the end of hostilities once engaged. It would be a dangerous illusion to think that, if war once starts, it will come to an early end, even if a success on any one of the several fronts on which it will be engaged should have been secured.

*Having thus made our position perfectly clear, I wish to* repeat to you my conviction that war between our two peoples would be the greatest calamity that could occur. I am certain that it is desired neither by our people nor by yours, and I cannot see that there is anything in the questions arising between Germany and Poland which could not and should not be resolved without the use of force if only a situation of confidence could be restored to enable discussions to be carried on in an atmosphere different from that which prevails today....

HERR HITLER TO MR. CHAMBERLAIN, AUGUST 23, 1939.

Germany has never sought conflict with England and has never interfered in English interests. On the contrary, she has for years endeavoured—although unfortunately in vain—to win England's friendship....

The German Reich, however, like every other State, possesses certain definite interests which it is impossible to renounce.... To these questions belong the German City of Danzig and the connected problem of the Corridor....

Your Excellency informs me in the name of the British Government that you will be obliged to render assistance to Poland in any such case of intervention on the part of Germany. I take note of this statement of yours and assure you that it can make no change in the determination of the Reich Government to safeguard the interests of the Reich.... Your assurance to the effect that in such an event you anticipate a long war is shared by myself. Germany if attacked by England will be found prepared and determined. I have already more than once declared before the German people and the world that there can be no doubt concerning the determination of the new German Reich rather to accept, for however long it might be, every sort of misery and tribulation than to sacrifice its national interests, let alone its honour....

H.M. GOVERNMENT TO THE GERMAN CHANCELLOR, AUGUST 28.

His Majesty's Government note the Chancellor's expression of his desire to make friendship the basis of the relations between Germany and the British Empire, and they fully share this desire. They believe with him that if a complete and lasting understanding between the two countries could be established it would bring untold blessings to both peoples....

A just settlement of these questions between Germany and Poland may open the way to world peace. Failure to reach it would ruin the hopes of better understanding between Germany and Great Britain, would bring the two countries into conflict and might well plunge the whole world into war. Such an outcome would be a calamity without parallel in history.

HERR HITLER TO H.M. GOVERNMENT, AUGUST 29, 1939.

... Though sceptical as to the prospects of a successful outcome, the German Government are prepared to accept the English proposal and to enter into direct discussions [with Poland]. They do so, as has already been emphasized, solely as the result of the impression made upon them by the written statement received from the British Government that they, too, desire a pact of friendship in accordance with the general lines indicated to the British Ambassador....

For the rest, in making these proposals the German Government have never had any intention of touching Poland's vital interests or questioning the existence of an independent Polish State. The German Government, accordingly, in these circumstances agree to accept the British Government's offer of their good offices in securing the despatch to Berlin of a Polish Emissary with full powers. They count on the arrival of this Emissary on Wednesday, August 30, 1939.

H.M. GOVERNMENT TO THE GERMAN CHANCELLOR, AUGUST 30.

His Majesty's Government note that the German Government accept the British proposal and are prepared to enter into direct discussions with the Polish Government.

His Majesty's Government also note that the German Government accepts the position of the British Government as to Poland's vital interests and independence. His Majesty's Government are at once informing the Polish Government of the German Government's reply....

His Majesty's Government fully recognize the need for speed in the initiation of discussion, and they share the apprehensions of the Chancellor arising from the proximity of two mobilized armies standing face to face. They would accordingly most strongly urge that both parties should undertake that during the negotiations no aggressive military movements will take place. His Majesty's Government feel confident that they could obtain such an undertaking from the Polish Government if the German Government would give similar assurances....

HERR HITLER TO H.M. GOVERNMENT, AUGUST 31.

... On August 29 the German Government, in spite of being sceptical as to the desire of the Polish Government to come to an understanding, declared themselves ready in the interests of peace to accept the British mediation or suggestion.... In this sense they declared themselves ready to receive a personage appointed by the Polish Government up to the evening of August 30, with the proviso that the latter was, in fact, empowered not only to discuss but to conduct and conclude negotiations.

### 'The German Government Have Waited in Vain'

Instead of a statement regarding the arrival of an authorized Polish personage, the first answer the Government of the Reich received to their readiness for an understanding was the news of the Polish mobilization, and only towards 12 o'clock on the night of August 30, 1939, did they receive a somewhat general assurance of British readiness to help towards the commencement of negotiations....

It has once more been made clear, as a result of a démarche which has meanwhile been made by the Polish Ambassador, that the latter himself has no plenary powers either to enter into any discussion or even to negotiate.

The Fuehrer and the German Government have thus waited two days in vain for the arrival of a Polish negotiator with plenary powers.

In these circumstances, the German Government regard their proposals as having this time, too, been to all intents and purposes rejected, although they considered that these proposals, in the form in which they were made known to the British Government also, were more than loyal, fair and practicable.

H.M. GOVERNMENT TO SIR NEVILE HENDERSON, 11 P.M. AUGUST 31.

Please inform German Government that we understand that Polish Government are taking steps to establish contact with them through Polish Ambassador in Berlin.

Please also ask them whether they agree to the necessity for securing an immediate provisional modus vivendi as regards Danzig....

MUNICIPAL ... NAINI ...

Chapter 3

# THE FINAL CRISIS AND THE ONSLAUGHT ON POLAND

*Dismissal of Polish Customs Inspectors—Von Weizsacker and the "Persecution" of Poles—Invasion of Silesia—Hitler Sees British Ambassador—Baseless Charges Rebutted—Pact with Soviet—Hitler's "Peaceful Intentions"—Fuehrer and Sir Nevile Henderson—Britain's Word—Von Ribbentrop's Fury—Britain and France Present their Ultimatums—Britain at War*

THE situation at Danzig had rapidly deteriorated at the beginning of August, and the high-handed action on August 4 of the Danzig Senate in dismissing the customs inspectors at four posts on the Danzig-East Prussian frontier led to the most vigorous protests. The Germans intervened denying that any such order had been given. Colonel Beck, however, had documentary proof to the contrary, and replied that any further attempt to compromise the rights and interests of Poland would be regarded as an act of aggression.

On August 16 Sir Nevile Henderson, our Ambassador in Berlin, reported the result of a stormy interview of the evening before with State Secretary Baron von Weizsäcker. From this it became perfectly clear that all the chicanery of German diplomacy was to be employed to make out a case of violence and persecution against the Poles, so that the contemplated violation of their territory might be justified. Herr Hitler's patience, von Weizsacker indicated, was now exhausted. Underlying our Ambassador's calm account one senses a highly unpleasant interview. "We disputed with acrimony about the rights and wrongs of the case without either apparently convincing the other.' By this time the full seriousness of the situation was realized and, as Sir Nevile pointed out, events were drifting towards a situation in which neither side would be in a position to give way.

**An Acrimonious Dispute**

Again the point was made perfectly clear to the German statesman that if Germany resorted to force Britain would resist with force. The State Secretary, who was clearly expressing the views of the German Government, flatly turned down the suggestion that they should make some conciliatory gesture, and said that he could not believe that the British obligations to Poland meant that it was necessary for her "to follow blindly every eccentric step on the part of a lunatic." During this historic discussion the number of persecutions by the Poles of innocent Germans grew to "thousands"—and at the end Sir Nevile left the German minister apparently unmoved by his insistence on the inevitability of British intervention.

The "persecution" canard fostered by the Nazi propaganda deserves examination in the light of documents published in the British Blue Book. Sir Horace Kennard, British Ambassador in Warsaw, was at great pains to verify or refute the German accusations. On August 24 he declared himself perfectly satisfied that the campaign was a gross distortion and exaggeration of the facts. He described as "merely silly" the German accounts that Poles had beaten Germans with chains, thrown them on barbed wire, or forced them to shout insults against Herr Hitler in chorus.

In one specific case of a German arrested in connexion with the murder of a Polish policeman on August 15 it was stated in the German press that he had been beaten to death and his wife and children thrown out of the window. A British newspaper correspondent had had an interview with the "victim" in prison, had found that he had never been beaten and was in excellent health, and that the story about his wife and children was a complete fabrication.



**BRITAIN IN BERLIN**

**Sir Nevile Henderson was appointed British Ambassador to Germany in 1937. His conversations with Hitler during the days preceding the war are graphically recorded in the British "Blue Book."**

*Bassano*

On the other hand, Sir H. Kennard spoke of the wholesale removal of Poles from frontier districts in Silesia and E. Prussia, the smashing of property, and other forms of persecution by Germans.

Gradually the baiting and pin-prick incidents on the frontier increased. German bands not of irregulars but of fully equipped military detachments crossed the Silesian frontier, firing shots and attacking blockhouses and customs posts. The stories of persecutions of the German minority, though substantially the same as those fabricated against Czechoslovakia in the previous year, were made to appear many times worse in the case of Poland. The object of these ruses was, in the case of the frontier incidents, to provoke retaliation which might easily be construed as Polish aggression, and in the persecution stories to arouse German indignation at the supposed ill-treatment of their fellow nationals, which would foster the war spirit in Germany. It was becoming clear that Hitler had planned the complete extinction of Poland and was employing what the Prime Minister called his sickeningly familiar technique.

**Hitler's Familiar Technique**

Not till the last shred of hope was abandoned did Mr. Chamberlain cease to put the British case fairly and squarely to Herr Hitler. Never again should it be said that war was precipitated by the obscurity which surrounded the British attitude. The menacing news of a German-Soviet agreement made no difference to the determination of Britain and France to uphold their pledges to Poland. Mr. Chamberlain reiterated this in a letter to the Fuehrer on August 22, adjuring him to pause before plunging Europe into war.

But the Fuehrer continued to rave and storm and to bring clattering down on the table the hand that had so often held the pen. He received the British Ambassador on the night of August 23. Herr von Ribbentrop was still in Russia sealing his bargain with Stalin, and when that calm, dignified diplomat Sir Nevile Henderson was ushered into the fastness of Berchtesgaden he found himself confronted not by a leader of a great nation remorselessly and silently pursuing a reasoned course, but by a man beside himself with passion, howling invective at those who were attempting to stay his hand in its pursuit of tyranny.

In the stream of abuse which fell on the surprised Ambassador's ears, again



centring round the supposed persecution of the Germans by the Poles, the excited Fuehrer advanced the fantastic story that the Poles were castrating Germans. Sir Nevile said he knew of one case of a sex maniac being treated as he deserved. Not one word of reason could be instilled. All was Britain's fault—Britain who had incited the Czechs, so that ultimately they had to be crushed; Britain who was driving Poland to its doom; Britain who had forced him into agreement with Russia. It is at least to the Fuehrer's credit that he "was not over-enthusiastic" about this *volte face* and the jettisoning of yet another cargo of solemn vows and protestations.

What of this strange bargain, the news of which burst like a bombshell on an incredulous world? It will be



**PERSONALITIES IN POLAND**

**Left, Colonel Jozef Beck, Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1932-39. He joined Pilsudski's Polish Legions in 1914. Above is Sir Howard Kennard, British Ambassador to Poland since 1935. On the right is Dr. Joseph Lipski, who prior to the war was the Polish Envoy to Germany.**

*Photos, Vandyk; Elliott and Fry, Wide World*

remembered that at the time there was staying in Moscow a British military mission discussing problems of co-operation between Great Britain and Russia. With complete cynicism the Soviet leader allowed its deliberations to continue during the secret negotiations with Germany for a pact of non-aggression. Something of the colossal price paid for this concession we already know—the coveted Ukraine, the former Russian provinces of Poland, a position on the Rumanian frontier and a trade agreement which, however, on the face of it does not seem overwhelmingly favourable to Russia.

The text of this famous instrument by which the vulture and the jackal were to share the spoils of a crushed country did not contain any indication that its scope lay further than a simple pact of non-aggression. Its terms ran:

NON-AGGRESSION PACT BETWEEN GERMANY AND THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS.

The Government of the German Reich and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, guided by the desire to strengthen the cause of peace between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and taking as a basis the fundamental regulations of the Neutrality Agreement concluded in April 1926 between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, have reached the following agreement:

Article I. The two Contracting Parties bind themselves to refrain from any act of force, any aggressive action and any attack on one another, both singly and also jointly with other Powers.

Art. 2. In the event of one of the Contracting Parties becoming the object of warlike action on the part of a third Power, the other Contracting Party shall in no manner support this third Power.

Art. 3. The Governments of the two Contracting Parties shall in future remain continuously in touch with one another, by way of consultation, in order to inform one another on questions touching their joint interests.

Art. 4. Neither of the two Contracting Parties shall participate in any grouping of Powers which is directed directly or indirectly against the other Party.

Art. 5. In the event of disputes or disagreements arising between the Contracting Parties on questions of this or that kind,



both Parties would clarify these disputes or disagreements exclusively by means of friendly exchange of opinion or, if necessary, by arbitration committees.

Art. 6. The present Agreement shall be concluded for a period of ten years on the understanding that, in so far as one of the Contracting Parties does not give notice of termination one year before the end of this period, the period of validity of this Agreement shall automatically be regarded as prolonged for a further period of five years.

Art. 7. The present Agreement shall be ratified within the shortest possible time. The instruments of ratification shall be exchanged in Berlin. The Agreement takes effect immediately after it has been signed.

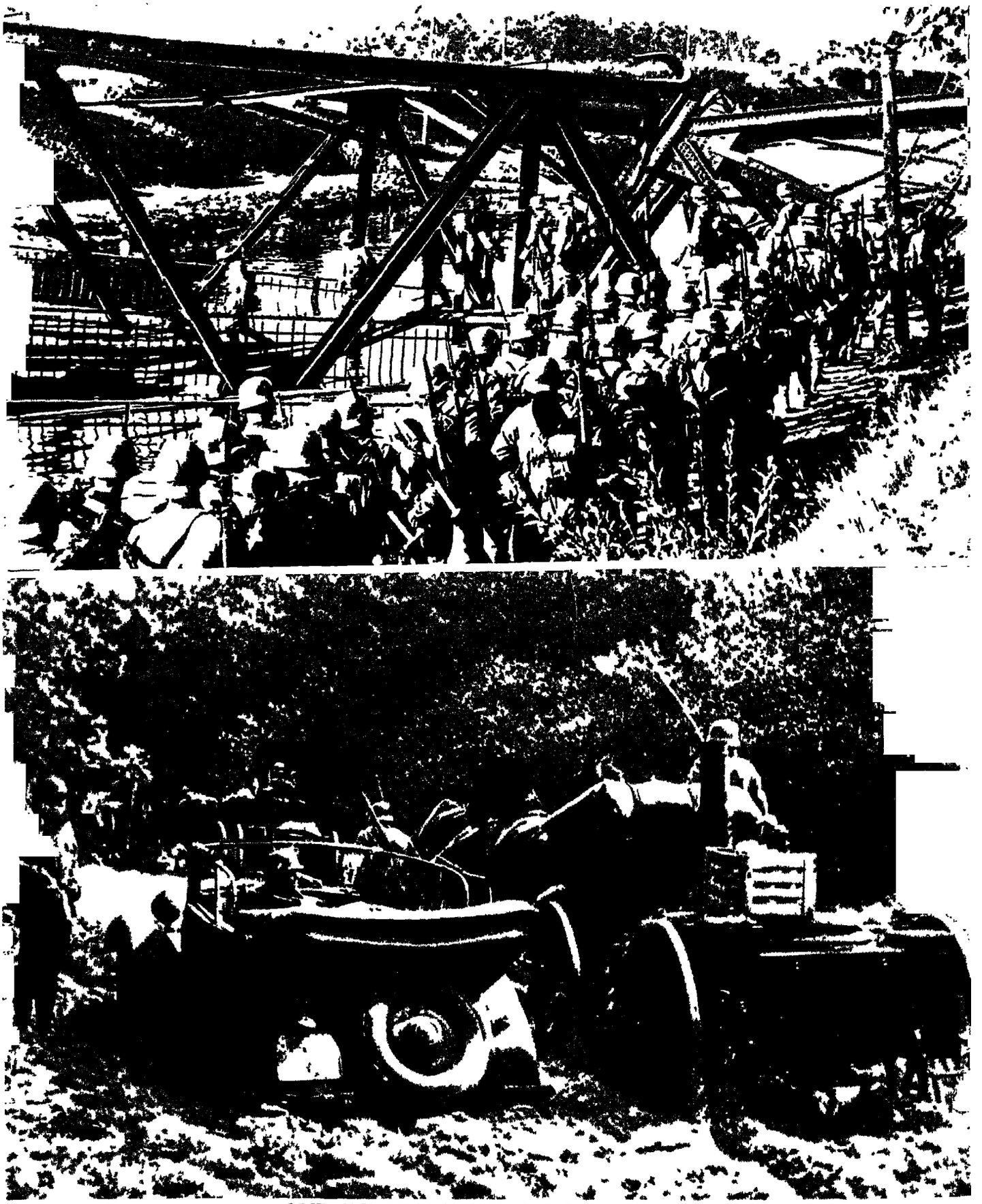
This document was signed by von Ribbentrop and Molotov, on August 23, 1939.

On August 24 the British parliament met and the Prime Minister admitted that the announcement of the pact had come as a surprise, a very unpleasant



HITLER GIVES THE WORD FOR WAR

At a meeting of the Reichstag in the Kroll Opera House in Berlin on Friday, September 1, 1939, the German leader gave the word that unleashed war upon Europe. His feeble attempt to justify German aggression against Poland deceived no one—not even the thousand "yes-men" who listened to him. Goering, sitting behind Hitler, was nominated as the Fuehrer's successor in the same speech.



## OBSTACLES OF MAN AND NATURE

Although the Poles hampered the German advance by blowing up bridges on their line of retreat, as shown in the upper photograph, such measures only afforded temporary relief The Germans were fortunate in being able to make rapid progress before the rainy season, for Polish mud is notorious Even so, some of the roads were almost impassable, and, above, German transport is seen in difficulties on the way to the front

*Photos Wide World*



*Photo, Central Press*

## A 'BRIDGE OF SIGHS' FOR THE GERMANS

As shown above and in the opposite page, the destruction of bridges is one of the first things carried out by a retreating army, for anything which will delay the enemy's advance is of the utmost value Above is a bridge over the Kamionka blown up by the retreating Polish army A narrow stream can, of course, be very swiftly rebridged by material brought up by the advancing enemy



**NAZI GUNS IN A POLISH VILLAGE THEY HAD DESTROYED**

After the way had been cleared by a merciless and long-sustained aerial attack and a bombardment by long-range artillery which crushed the resistance of the Polish defence, German infantry and guns pushed on through the desolated towns and villages. This methodical reduction of the Polish opposition contributed very largely to the high speed of the German invasion.

*Photo, Associated Press*

surprise, to the Government, but even at this last hour he hoped that reason and sanity might still prevail. He refuted absolutely the German lie that it was the British guarantee to Poland that led Poland to refuse negotiations over the return of Danzig and the Corridor to the Reich. That refusal had taken place before the British guarantee was made. In a noble peroration he said that if war should come we should not be fighting for the political future of a far-away city in a foreign land, but for the preservation of the principles of the observance of international agreements once they have been entered into and the renunciation of force in the settlement of international differences.

From this time onwards the grim progress of the warmongers is marked by more intrigue and more provocative incidents. Polish sentries were attacked and their bodies mutilated. In Berlin the Polish Ambassador had an interview with Field-Marshal Goering, who was "most cordial." He talked platitudes, and then the real reason for his excessive cordiality became apparent. He had a suggestion to make. Danzig and so forth were small matters. The real stumbling block to friendly relations was Poland's alliance with Britain. If that could be removed, heaven knows what years of peace and prosperity lay before Poland. Had it succeeded this would have been a master stroke of chicanery, for Germany would have alienated Poland from France and Britain and shared out the spoils with Russia, with no immediate threat on her Western border. But the Poles never even considered the suggestion.

On August 25 the Fuehrer made a further attempt to buy off the intervention of the Allies with soft words and fulsome protestations of his pacific intentions. Once this Polish question was decided he had no further claims on Europe. He would settle down to the peaceful reconstruction of his country as an artist rather than a soldier. Memory was not so short as to forget other protestations and pledges of this character broken and thrown aside as soon as some new tempting bait presented itself.

**Fuehrer's Soft Words**

Still the efforts of the British Government to secure a peaceful solution never wavered. The Fuehrer was answered in temperate terms, offered every possible assistance in negotiation with the Poles, but assured again most firmly that an armed attack on that country would bring France and Britain in against Germany. In this connexion there was an illuminating conversation on the evening of August 28 between the Fuehrer and Sir Nevile Henderson, who had said that Britain's word was her word and she never had and never would break it. He then quoted a passage from a German book about Marshal Blücher's exhortation to his troops when hurrying to the support of Wellington at Waterloo, "Forward, my children: I have given my word to my brother Wellington, and you cannot wish me to break it." To this Hitler replied: "Things were different 125 years ago." Sir Nevile then acidly observed, "not so far as England is concerned," and asked Hitler what value he would place on British friendship, which he said that he desired, if the first act was one of disloyalty to a friend? There is no recorded answer to this question.

One of the most inspiring features of all is the calm, straightforward attitude of Britain as exemplified by her Ambassador in dealing with Hitler and his politicians. To Hitler's reiterated plea that he would welcome British friendship there was always the answer that such friendship was his if he would agree to a settlement by direct negotiation with Poland. Britain was prepared to make concessions if an atmosphere of confidence were restored, but under no circumstances could they be exacted by a threat of force. Never was a great nation's attitude more unequivocally explained. And while the British Cabinet and their emissary were struggling to make Hitler see how easily he could avert the misery with which he threatened the world and the ruin which he was inviting for himself, his armies were already marching towards the Polish frontier.

**Last Efforts for Peace**

On August 29, two days before the invasion of Poland, the Fuehrer made a proposal which was to lead to a signal perjury. He first demanded that Poland should send Colonel Beck or some other plenipotentiary to see him on the following day to receive his "terms." This was in itself an impossible proposition. As the British Ambassador in Warsaw wired: "I feel sure that it would be impossible to induce the Polish Government to send M. Beck or any other representative immediately to Berlin to discuss a settlement on basis proposed by Herr Hitler. They would sooner fight and perish rather than submit to such humiliation, especially after examples of Czechoslovakia, Lithuania and Austria." Poland, he felt, would not listen to a dictated settlement. The impudence of this proposal to repeat to a Polish statesman the studied insults of a ready-made conqueror met with a blank refusal. The normal diplomatic method of communication between the two countries was for Herr Hitler to hand to the Polish Ambassador in Berlin whatever terms of negotiation he proposed.

This point was stressed by Sir Nevile Henderson in an interview with Ribbentrop. At the same time he told the German that the British Government had constantly urged the Polish Government to avoid provocative action. "With damned little effect," replied that ex-commercial traveller. "I mildly retorted," said Sir Nevile, "that I was surprised to hear such language from a Minister of Foreign Affairs." The precious "terms" the Germans proposed to hand to Poland were read by Ribbentrop in German and at top speed.

**"Aping Hitler at His Worst"**

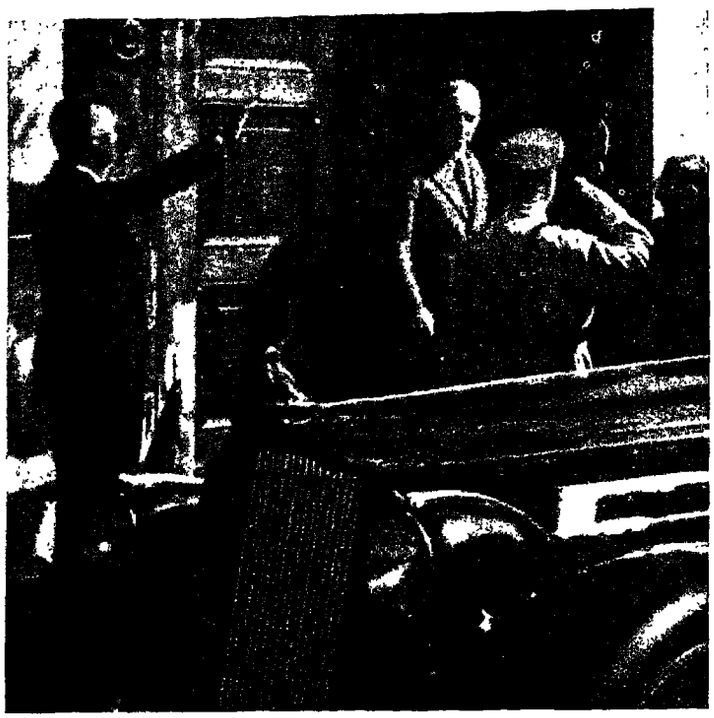
Sir Nevile got the gist of them and asked for a copy. Ribbentrop replied that it was now too late, as no Polish representative had arrived by midnight. To Sir Nevile's suggestion that he should send for the Polish Ambassador and communicate them to him, Ribbentrop replied in most violent language that he would never ask the Ambassador to visit him. "Herr von Ribbentrop's demeanour," Sir Nevile telegraphed Lord Halifax, "was aping Herr Hitler at his worst."

Under such impossible conditions efforts were still continued during August 31 to open direct negotiations between Poland and Germany. It was not until the evening of that day that von Ribbentrop received M. Lipski, the Polish Ambassador in Berlin. It was after this interview that the German proposals were broadcast. The terms issued by wireless from Berlin that night took the following form:

(1) The Free City of Danzig, by virtue of its undeniably German character and the unanimous wish of its population, shall immediately be attached to the Reich.

(2) A corridor stretching from the Baltic to the line Marienwerder-Graudenz-Kulm-Bromberg (including these towns) and then towards the west as far as Schoenlanke shall be allowed to speak for itself as to whether it wishes to be attached to Germany or Poland.

(3) For this purpose a plebiscite will be organized in this territory in which will participate all Germans domiciled in the territory in January 1918, and Poles and Kassubes born in this territory after that date or domiciled in a permanent manner in this territory since that date, as well as Germans expelled from this territory. In order to ensure an impartial plebiscite and to make the necessary preparations, the territory in question will be immediately submitted, as was the case with the Saar Basin, to an international commission







## POLAND'S DEATH WARRANT

**Ribbentrop, who stayed at the old Austrian embassy in Moscow (top left), negotiated and signed the Soviet-Nazi Pact with Molotov (above) in record time. His grim look as he studied the document on his return (lower left) suggests perhaps that he *may have already regretted his hasty action.***

*Photos : Mondiale*

formed from the four Great Powers—Italy, Soviet Russia, Great Britain, and France. To this end the territory is to be evacuated in the shortest possible time by Polish troops, police, and authorities.

(4) From this territory will be excepted the Port of Gdynia, which is in principle sovereign Polish territory to the extent that this port is inhabited by Poles. The definite frontiers of this Polish port are to be settled between Germany and Poland, and if necessary by international arbitration.

(5) In order to assure the necessary time for the necessarily extensive preparations for the carrying out of a just plebiscite this plebiscite will not take place before the expiry of 12 months.

(6) In order, during this time, to guarantee to Germany its communications with East Prussia, and to Poland her communication with the sea, roads and railways will be laid down rendering free transit possible. In this connexion only those dues would be levied as are necessary for the maintenance of communications or the carrying out of transportation.

(7) The division of the territory will be decided by a simple majority of the votes cast.

(8) In order, after the plebiscite has taken place—quite apart from how it may result—to guarantee the safety of Germany's free traffic with its province of Danzig-East Prussia, and to guarantee Poland's connexion with the sea, Germany will receive, in the event of the plebiscite region falling to Poland, an extra-territorial traffic zone in the direction of Butow-Danzig or Dirschau, for the construction of a motor road and a four-track railway line. The road and the railway shall be constructed in such a manner that the Polish lines of communication will not be affected—that is to say, it will be crossed either by viaducts or by tunnels. The width of the territory shall be fixed at one kilometre and this zone will remain German sovereign territory. If the plebiscite is advantageous to Germany, Poland shall receive the same right to extra-territorial roads and railways in order to ensure Polish traffic with the Port of Gdynia.

(9) In the event of the return of the Corridor to the German Reich an exchange of populations shall take place between Poland and Germany in so far as conditions in the Corridor permit.

(10) Negotiations are to take place regarding the special rights desired by Poland in Danzig and similar rights desired by Germany in Gdynia.

(11) In order to remove the feeling of a threat, both Danzig and Gdynia shall receive the character of trading cities pure and simple—that is to say, without any military establishments or fortifications.

(12) The Hela Peninsula will be completely demilitarized whether it falls to Germany or to Poland.

(13) As the German Reich has strong complaints to make and Poland also believes

she has grievances, both parties agree to submit these complaints to an international commission. Germany and Poland undertake to repair all economic and other damage that has occurred since 1918, or pay equivalent compensation, and to annul all expropriations.

(14) In order to remove the feeling of loss of national rights on the part of Germans remaining in Poland and Poles remaining in Germany, and to guarantee that they are not employed for actions or services which are incompatible with their national feeling, both parties shall undertake to protect the rights of each other's minorities by agreements, in particular respecting freedom of organization of these minorities. Both parties undertake not to conscript members of these minorities for military service.

(15) After agreement in principle has been reached on these proposals Germany and Poland shall declare themselves prepared immediately to order the demobilization of their respective armed forces.

(16) Further measures that may be required to expedite the carrying out of the above agreement shall be the subject of mutual agreement between Germany and Poland.

*** The boundary or base of the suggested plebiscite area referred to in Point 2 of the proposals would run from Marienwerder, at the westernmost extremity of East Prussia, 20 miles south of Marienburg, through Graudenz (Grudziadz), a Polish border town on the river Vistula, then through Bromberg (Bydgoszcz), a town with a population of more than 117,000, and strike west to Schönlanke, a German town on the border of Pomerania, 15 miles W.S.W. of Schneidemühl.

M. Lipski at once tried to get in touch with Warsaw, but all means of communication had deliberately been cut.

The Polish Government never had an opportunity of considering Hitler's terms, which were never communicated to them before they were broadcast to the world. Nor were they communicated to the British Government in writing before this broadcast. The German troops were marching into Poland when Hitler, on September 1, issued his perjured proclamation to the German Army.

"The Polish State has refused the peaceful settlement of relations which I desired, and has appealed to arms. Germans in Poland are persecuted with bloody terror and driven from their houses. A series of violations of the frontier, intolerable to a great Power, prove that Poland is no longer willing to respect the frontier of the Reich.

"In order to put an end to this lunacy, I have no other choice than to meet force with force from now on. The German Army will fight the battle for the honour and the vital rights of





**PERFIDY CONGRATULATED**

Both Germany and Russia had non-aggression pacts with Poland, but both found it convenient to break their word. The architect of the German-Russian pact, Foreign Minister Ribbentrop, is seen here receiving the congratulations of his master and of his new associate in crime.

*Photos, Wide World and Planet News*

reborn Germany with hard determination. I expect that every soldier, mindful of the great traditions of eternal German soldiery, will ever remain conscious that he is a representative of the National-Socialist Greater Germany. Long live our people and our Reich."

"The Polish state has refused the peaceful settlement of relations which I desired." What the Polish state in reality refused was to send a plenipotentiary to Berlin to accept terms which they had never seen and we now know to be intolerable—proposed under the threat of war.

Messages between the British and German Governments passed until the early morning of September 3. At eleven o'clock on that day the Prime Minister declared Great Britain to be at war. "The senseless ambition of one man" had plunged Europe into an armed conflict the end of which no man could foresee. France, too, had imposed a time limit, and after 5 p.m. was also at war, which could only end when Hitlerism had been destroyed and a liberated Europe re-established.

**War is Declared**

During these fateful weeks noble efforts were made by His Holiness the Pope and the heads of neutral nations to secure a settlement by negotiation. President Roosevelt addressed messages to the King of Italy, to Herr Hitler, and to President Moscicki of Poland. On August 23 the King of the Belgians, in the name of the Oslo group of states (represented by the King of Denmark, the President of Finland, the Grand Duchess of Luxemburg, the King of Norway, the Queen of the Netherlands, and the King of Sweden), broadcast an appeal for peace—"a noble and generous appeal" as the French Government termed it in their reply. "Armies are gathering for a horrible struggle," he said, "which will know neither victor nor vanquished . . . the world is moving in such a period of tension that there is a risk that all international co-operation should become impossible . . . lack of confidence reigns everywhere. But there is no people which wants to send its children to their deaths. All the States have the same interest. Time is getting short. If we wait much longer it will become more difficult to make direct contacts."



AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR

**As revealed in the Blue Book published by the British Government shortly after the outbreak of war, the brunt of the Nazi fury seems to have fallen on our former ambassador in Berlin, Sir Nevile Henderson. In this photo he is seen entering the Chancellery in Berlin, with an urgent message from Britain, on August 29. He is accompanied by Dr. Meissner, Secretary of State.**

*Photo, Wide World*

Further, King Leopold and Queen Wilhelmina offered their personal mediation, a gesture welcomed by Britain, France and Italy. Then, on August 24, the Pope broadcast a most moving address to the world. "A grave hour is striking for the great human family," he said, "an hour of tremendous deliberation, in which our spiritual authority cannot disinterest itself from the task of inducing mankind to return to the path of justice and truth. . . . It is with the force of reason and not with that of arms that justice advances. Conquests and empires not founded on justice are not blessed by God. The danger is vast, but there is still time. Nothing is lost by peace. Everything is lost by war."

Finally, Signor Mussolini, who by this time had decided to remain neutral, offered to convene an international conference. But no neutral good will, no appeal to humanity could budge for a moment the remorseless decision of one man.



POLAND MOBILIZES

**On August 31 Poland ordered general mobilization; one hundred thousand men joined the colours within the first hour. Our photograph shows a crowd round a mobilization notice posted up in Warsaw and signed by President Moscicki and War Minister General Kasprzycki.**

*Photo, Keystone*

## *Historic Documents. II.*

# *THE PREMIER'S LAST WARNING TO GERMANY*

On September 1, 1939, in the House of Commons, Mr. Chamberlain announced the determination of the British Government to fulfil its treaty obligations to Poland.

I DO not propose to say many words tonight. The time has come when action rather than words is required. About eighteen months ago in this House I prayed that the responsibility might not fall upon me to ask this country to accept the awful arbitrament of war.

I fear that I am not able to avoid that responsibility. But at any rate I could not wish for conditions under which such a burden should fall upon me made clearer than they are today as to where my duty lies.

No one, I think, can say that the Government could have done more to try to keep open the way for an honourable and equitable settlement of the dispute between Germany and Poland. Nor have we neglected any means of making it crystal clear to the German Government that if they insisted on using force again in the manner in which they had used it in the past, we were resolved to oppose them by force.

Now that all the relevant documents are being made public we shall stand at the bar of history knowing that the responsibility for this terrible catastrophe lies on the shoulders of one man. The Chancellor has not hesitated to plunge the world into misery in order to serve his own senseless ambition.

I have now had all the correspondence with the German Government put into the form of a White Paper.

I do not think that it is necessary for me to refer in detail now to these documents, which are already past history.

There is just one passage from our most recent communication—or a recent communication—dated August 30, which I should like to quote because it shows how easily the final clash might have been avoided if there had been the least desire on the part of the German Government to arrive at a peaceful settlement.

In this document we said this: "His Majesty's Government fully recognize the need of speed in the initiation of discussion. They share the apprehensions of the Chancellor arising from the proximity of two mobilized armies standing face to face.

"They would accordingly most strongly urge that both parties should undertake that during the negotiations no aggressive military movement will take place. His Majesty's Government feel confident that they could obtain such an undertaking from the Polish Government if the German Government would give a similar assurance."

### Poland's Guarantee to Respect Frontiers

THAT telegram, which was repeated to Poland, brought an instantaneous reply from the Polish Government dated August 31, in which they say: "The Polish Government are also prepared, on a reciprocal basis, to give a formal guarantee, in the event of negotiations taking place, that Polish troops will not violate the frontiers of the German Reich, provided that a corresponding guarantee is given regarding any violation of the frontiers of Poland by troops of the Reich."

We never had any reply from the German Government to that suggestion. It was one which, if it had been followed, might have saved the catastrophe which took place this morning.

In the German broadcast last night—which recited the 16 points of the proposals which they had put forward—there occurred this sentence: "In these circumstances the Reich Government considers its proposals rejected."

I must examine that statement. I must tell the House what are the circumstances. To begin with, let me say that these proposals have never been communicated by Germany to Poland at all. The history of the affair is this:

On Tuesday, August 29, in replying to a note which we had sent to them, the German Government said among other things that they would immediately draw up proposals for a solution acceptable to themselves and would, if possible, place these at the disposal of the British Government before the arrival of the Polish negotiator.

It will be seen by examination of the White Paper that the German Government had stated that they counted upon the arrival of a plenipotentiary from Poland in Berlin on August 30—that is to say, on the following day.

In the meantime, of course, we were awaiting these proposals, but the next thing was that when our Ambassador saw Herr von Ribbentrop, the German Foreign Secretary, he urged upon him that when these proposals were ready—for we had heard no more about them—he should invite the Polish Ambassador to call and should hand him the proposals for transmission to his Government.

Thereupon, reports our Ambassador, von Ribbentrop, in the most violent terms, said he would never ask the Ambassador to visit him. He hinted that if the Polish Ambassador asked him for an interview it might be different.

The House will see that this was on Wednesday night, August 30, which, according to the German statement of last night, is now claimed to be the final day on which negotiation with Poland was acceptable. Germany therefore claims to put Poland in the wrong because by Wednesday night they had not entered upon negotiations with Germany about a set of proposals about which they had never heard.

Now what of ourselves? Upon the Wednesday night, at the interview to which I have just referred, Herr von Ribbentrop produced a lengthy document, which he read out in German in a loud voice at top speed.

### Proposals Drafted But Not Delivered

AFTER that our Ambassador asked for a copy of the document. His reply was that it was now too late, as the Polish representative had not arrived in Berlin by midnight. And so we never got a copy of those proposals, and the first time we heard them was when we heard them broadcast last night. . .

I am not pronouncing any opinion upon the terms themselves, for I do not feel called upon to do so. The proper course, in our view, was that these proposals should have been put before the Poles, who should have been given time to consider them and to see whether, in their opinion, they did or did not infringe those vital interests of Poland which Germany had assured us on a previous occasion she intended to respect.

Only last night the Polish Ambassador saw the German Foreign Secretary, Herr von Ribbentrop. Once again he expressed to him, what indeed the Polish Government had already said publicly, that they were willing to negotiate with Germany about their dispute on an equal basis.

What was the reply of the German Government? The reply was, without another word, that German troops crossed the Polish frontier this morning at dawn and have since been reported to be bombing open towns.

In these circumstances there is only one course open to us. His Majesty's Ambassador in Berlin and the French Ambassador have been instructed to hand to the German Government the following documents:

"Early this morning the German Chancellor issued a proclamation to the German Army which indicated clearly that he was about to attack Poland. Information which has reached His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the French Government indicates that German troops have crossed the Polish frontier and that attacks on Polish towns are proceeding.

"In these circumstances it appears to the Governments of the United Kingdom and France that by their action the German Government have created conditions—namely, an aggressive act of force against Polish territory which threatens the independence of Poland—calling for the implementation by the Governments of the United Kingdom and France of the undertaking given to Poland to come to her assistance.

"I am accordingly to inform your Excellency that unless the German Government are prepared to give His Majesty's Government satisfactory assurances that the German Government have suspended all aggressive action against Poland, and are prepared to withdraw their forces from Polish territory, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will, without hesitation, fulfil their obligations to Poland."

If the reply to this last warning is unfavourable—and I do not suggest it is likely to be otherwise—His Majesty's Ambassador is instructed to ask for his passports. In that case we are ready.

Now it only remains for us to set our teeth and to enter upon this struggle, which we so earnestly endeavoured to avoid, with determination to see it through to the end. We shall enter it with a clear conscience, with the support of the Dominions and of the British Empire, and with the moral approval of the greater part of the world.

## *Historic Documents. III and IV.*

# *'BRITAIN IS AT WAR WITH GERMANY'*

In a broadcast from the Cabinet Room at 10, Downing Street at 11.15 a.m. on September 3, 1939, the Prime Minister announced that the ultimatum to Germany had expired and that therefore Britain was again at war.

THIS morning the British Ambassador in Berlin handed the German Government a final Note stating that unless we heard from them by eleven o'clock that they were prepared at once to withdraw their troops from Poland a state of war would exist between us.

I have to tell you now that no such undertaking has been received, and that consequently this country is at war with Germany.

You can imagine what a bitter blow it is to me that all my long struggle to win peace has failed. Yet I cannot believe that there is anything more, or anything different that I could have done and that would have been more successful.

Up to the very last it would have been quite possible to have arranged a peaceful and honourable settlement between Germany and Poland, but Hitler would not have it.

He had evidently made up his mind to attack Poland whatever happened, and although he now says he put forward reasonable proposals which were rejected by the Poles, that is not a true statement.

THE proposals were never shown to the Poles, nor to us and though they were announced in a German broadcast on Thursday night Hitler did not wait to hear comments on them, but ordered his troops to cross the Polish frontier.

His action shows convincingly that there is no chance of expecting that this man will ever give up his practice of using force to gain his will. He can only be stopped by force.

We and France are today, in fulfilment of our obligations, going to the aid of Poland, who is so bravely resisting this wicked and unprovoked attack on her people.

We have a clear conscience. We have done all that any country could do to establish peace.

The situation in which no word given by Germany's ruler could be trusted and no people or country could feel themselves safe has become intolerable.

And now that we have resolved to finish it I know that you will all play your part with calmness and courage.

At such a moment as this the assurances of support that we have received from the Empire are a source of profound encouragement to us.

When I have finished speaking certain detailed announcements will be made on behalf of the Government. Give these your closest attention.

The Government have made plans under which it will be possible to carry on the work of the nation in the days of stress and strain that may be ahead. But these plans need your help.

### Nation's Work Must Go On

YOU may be taking your part in the fighting services or as a volunteer in one of the branches of civil defence. If so, you will report for duty in accordance with the instructions you have received.

You may be engaged in work essential to the prosecution of war, for the maintenance of the life of the people—in factories, in transport, in public utility concerns, or in the supply of other necessaries of life.

If so, it is of vital importance that you should carry on with your jobs.

Now may God bless you all. May He defend the right. It is the evil things that we shall be fighting against—brute force, bad faith, injustice, oppression and persecution—and against them I am certain that the right will prevail.

# *PARLIAMENT RECEIVES THE NEWS OF WAR*

At noon on September 3 Mr. Chamberlain read to the House of Commons the terms of the British ultimatum which had been handed to the German Foreign Secretary by the British Ambassador in Berlin three hours earlier.

WHEN I spoke last night in the House I could not but be aware that in some parts of the House there were doubts and some bewilderment as to whether there had been any weakening, hesitation or vacillation on the part of the Government.

In the circumstances I make no reproaches, for if I had been in the same position as hon. members on those benches and not been in the position of having the information which we have I might have felt the same.

The statement I have to make this morning will show that there is no ground for those doubts. We were in consultation all day yesterday with the French Government, and we felt that the intensified action which the Germans were taking against Poland allowed of no delay in making our position clear.

### British Government's Ultimatum

ACCORDINGLY we decided to send to our Ambassador in Berlin instructions which he was to hand at nine o'clock this morning to the German Foreign Secretary, which read as follows:

"Sir,—In the communication which I had the honour to make to you on September 1, I informed you on the instructions of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that unless the German Government were prepared to give His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom satisfactory assurances that the German Government had suspended all aggressive action against Poland and were prepared promptly to withdraw their forces from Polish territory His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom would, without hesitation, fulfil their obligations to Poland.

"Although it is now more than twenty-four hours ago no reply has been received, and German attacks on Poland have been continued and intensified.

"I have, therefore, to inform you that unless not later than eleven a.m. British Summer Time today, September 3, satisfactory assurances to the above effect have been given by the German Government and have reached His Majesty's Government in London, a state of war would exist between the two countries as from that hour."

SIR, that was a final Note. No such undertaking was received by the time stipulated, and consequently this country is now at war with Germany.

I am in a position to inform this House that according to arrangements made between the British and French Governments the French Ambassador in Berlin is at this moment making a similar *démarche* also accompanied by a definite time-limit.

The House has already been made aware of our plans, and, as I said the other day, we are ready.

It is a sad day for all of us. For none is it sadder than for me. Everything that I worked for, everything that I had hoped for, everything that I believed in during my public life has crashed into ruins this morning. There is only one thing left for me, and that is to devote what strength and powers I have to forwarding the victory of the cause for which we have to sacrifice so much.

I CANNOT tell what part I may be allowed to play myself, but I trust I may live to see the day when Hitlerism has been destroyed and a restored and liberated Europe has been re-established.

Chapter 4

# THE CHALLENGE ACCEPTED: BRITAIN AND FRANCE PREPARE

*The Munich Settlement: Europe's Misgivings—The Plan in "Mein Kampf"—Bohemia and Moravia Absorbed—Fate of Slovakia—Chamberlain's Speech Marks Turn of the Tide—Daladier's Pronouncement—Britain Re-arms in Earnest—Aid from the Dominions—"The Fleet is Ready"—Speedy Expansion of the Army—Italy, Turkey, Egypt—The Challenge Accepted*

ON September 24, 1938, Mr. Chamberlain stepped out of a 'plane at Croydon to face the crowd which represented to him the tense anxiety of the nation. A wave of relief swept over the people when it was seen that the Premier had an expression of pleasure and confidence, and it deepened when he flourished a paper signed by Herr Hitler as well as by himself to the effect that German desires were satisfied by the proposed settlement in Czechoslovakia, and the foundations of a lasting peace had been laid. A week later Hitler announced to the whole of Germany in a great speech in the Sports Palace at Berlin that he had promised that after the settlement of the question of the Sudeten provinces of Czechoslovakia "there would be no more international problems."

There were, it is true, grave misgivings in many quarters. In the mind of the twenty million genuine followers and admirers of their Fuehrer was the grim programme, learned from "Mein Kampf," of years of warfare, even a glorification of war as a national tonic. The sword was not to be sheathed until every German-speaking population in Europe was gathered under the Nazi banner. Germany was hungry. The £80,000,000 which had been wrung out of shabby-genteel Austria was exhausted, and the mouths of the quarter-million Nazi agents were again wide open. Close students of European developments saw a more definite danger.

**Hitler's Plan of Conquest**

Hitler's original plan, conceived during his incarceration for a rather comic attempt to imitate Mussolini's march upon Rome, had been a crude idea for bringing together by force all the scattered fragments of the German race. The shrewd and practical men whom he and his colleagues had drawn into their service when they secured power had toned down the rawness of the plan, and given it a new and disarming extension. Instead of mouthing insults to the French and fixing their eyes so conspicuously upon Alsace-Lorraine, why not turn south-eastwards and develop, under German control, the rich lands along the course of the Danube? The plan was drawn up, and actually published in German scientific weeklies, at the time of the annexation of Austria: a plan of very great ability, full of the richest promise to German industry, and so little alarming to the Western Powers because it did not propose to extend by conquest and it promised a greater prosperity to all Europe.



HOPES THAT FADED

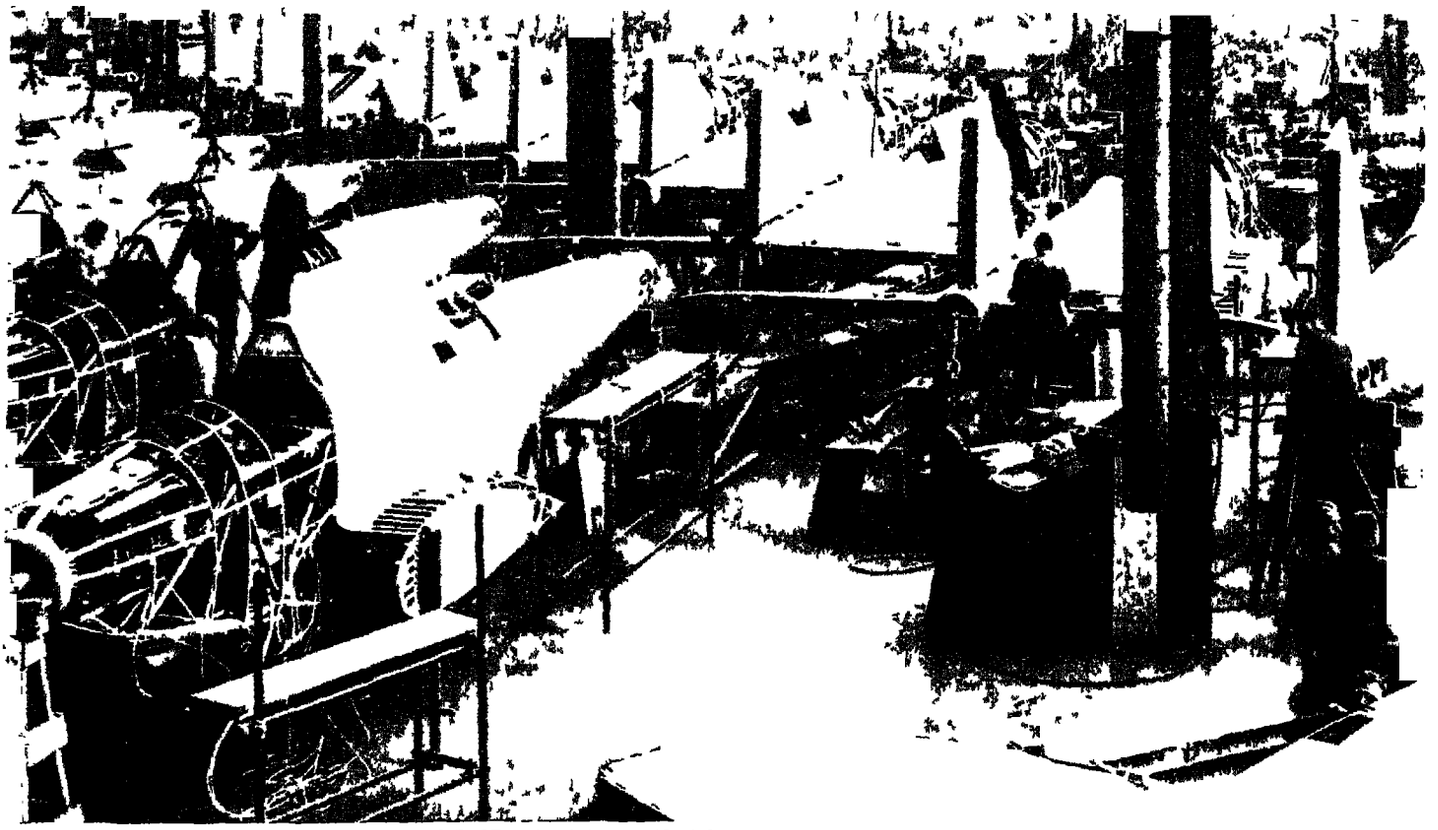
"I believe it is peace for our time" were the words with which Mr. Chamberlain greeted this crowd outside 10, Downing Street on his return from Munich.

*Photo, Topical*

But Czechoslovakia stood like a continental Gibraltar in the path of this insidious ambition. It was the real Iron Gate on the Danube: the gate to the Ukraine as well as to the Balkan countries. The proceedings at Munich on September 29 were watched with concern, and the vagueness of much of the final settlement was disquieting. The events which quickly followed justified the worst misgivings. They showed that a gentleman's agreement could not be made with a Nazi leader; and the vague arrangement about guaranteeing the new frontier of Bohemia had been in effect left to a gentleman's agreement. It was forgotten that the very title of the last chapter of Hitler's book, written fifteen years before, and printed large before the eyes of millions of Germans, was, "What is Necessary is Right," or, as Dr. Rosenberg put it: "Right is what the Aryan considers Right."

**Munich—and after**

The destruction of Czechoslovakia proceeded rapidly. In early October the Poles and the Hungarians bit large slices out of its rich flanks. The line of demarcation, which had been sketchily drawn in an insincere regard for the German minority, was now drawn farther and farther east. The Czechs' magnificent line of self-defence was obliterated, and the Germans roped in the Czech industrial towns and, finally, annihilated the splendid little civilization of Bohemia. On November 19 the Prague Parliament was compelled to allow Slovakia and Ruthenia, which had been encouraged to rebel, to detach themselves and leave Bohemia standing alone and defenceless. The smooth manufacture of pretexts for German "protection" went on and the last cynical step was taken. On March 15 of 1939 Bohemia and Moravia, the lands of the Czechs which had once been a



**BIRTH OF BRITAIN'S BOMBERS**

**Above is seen a corner of the erecting shop in an aeroplane factory somewhere in England ' Here Fairey Battle bombers are constructed by the latest methods The fuselages, with Rolls-Royce Merlin supercharged engines installed, are in the process of completion They will have a range of 1 000 miles and can travel with a full load at over 250 m p h**

*Photo Fox*

bulwark of European civilization against Asiatic marauders were declared Protectorates of the German Reich

A large part of Europe had now become disgusted at the pretexts which covered each of these aggressions A determined well-organized, richly endowed propaganda such as the Germans pursued all over Europe and America might persuade many that, as Dr Goebbels broadcast from Berlin, in Hitler's name, at five in the morning of March 15, there had been in 1938 "an unbearable regime of terrorism in Czechoslovakia" It was false, for the word of any traveller who visited Czechoslovakia before 1933 would show how amicably most of the Czechs and the Sudeten Germans had lived together until Nazi agents spread their poison

But when Dr Goebbels went on to say that the same Czech terrorism compelled Germany to annex Bohemia and Moravia in the spring of 1939, men felt that they were mocked

**Hitler's Proclamation**

The Gestapo and the German Storm Troops had held the Czechs by the throat since the previous October The setting up of Czech puppet-statesmen, the pretence that German *Kultur* was not going violently to displace the fine humanitarian culture of the Czechs, could throw only the thinnest veil over the flagrant violation of the solemn engagement undertaken at Munich Hitler's proclamation to the Czech people on March 16 will some day be cited in history as a supreme instance of the kind of openly cynical untruth with which Germany bluffed and affronted Europe Hitler, in fact, effronted the scholarship of his own country when he claimed that Bohemia and Moravia had for a thousand years belonged to the legitimate sphere of the German people, and had been "torn from it by force and unreason"

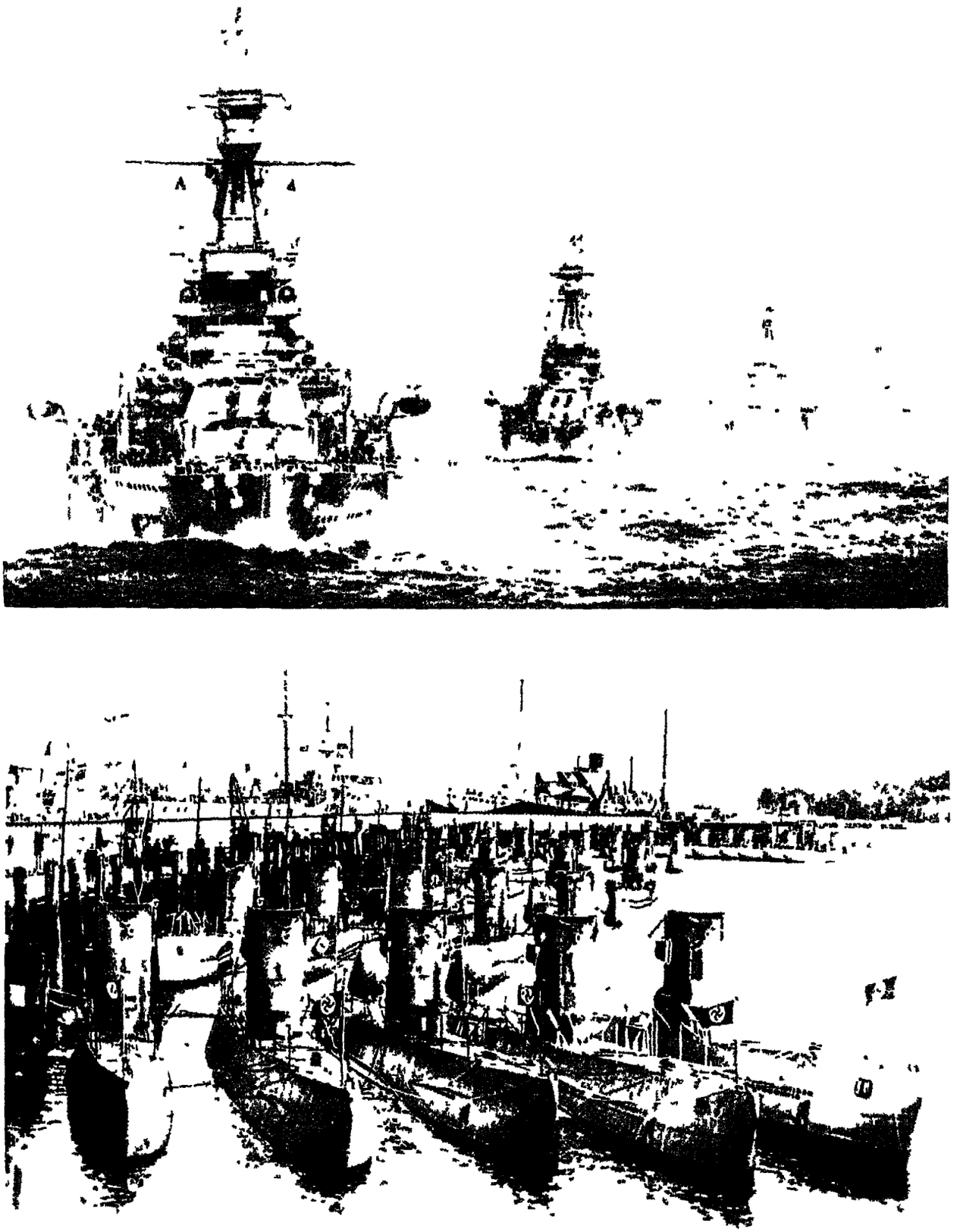
And history will probably take Mr Chamberlain's speech at Birmingham on March 12, 1939, as the first symptom of the turn of the tide Americans and the people of neutral countries felt something like a thrill when the message came that England, of whose ancient courage and faith they had begun to despair, was raising its face once more

The Times," pronounced the virtual annexation of Czechoslovakia as "this crude and brutal act of oppression and suppression" The Daily Telegraph" said that "monstrous outrage is the mildest term that can be applied to it" Less Conservative papers could hardly improve upon this Mr Chamberlain was still measured and deliberate in his utterance, but he struck a new note He recalled Hitler's solemn and repeated assurances to him that the severance of the Sudeten provinces was "the last territorial claim that I have to make in Europe," and ' I shall not be interested in the Czech State any further" He disdainfully repudiated the Nazi pretext that this violation of a solemn promise was necessitated by new Czech outrages And he concluded, very gravely

> I feel bound to report that while I am not prepared to engage this country by new unspecified commitments operating under conditions which cannot now be foreseen, yet no greater mistake could be made than to suppose that because it believes war to be a senseless and cruel thing this nation has so lost its fibre that it will not take part to the utmost of its power in resisting such a challenge if it ever were made

He claimed that in saying this he had the support of England, of the Empire, and of ' all nations who value peace indeed but who value freedom even more" M Daladier made an equally courageous pronouncement in the Senate on March 19 "We are," he said, "going to show Europe that we are standing with our backs to the wall"

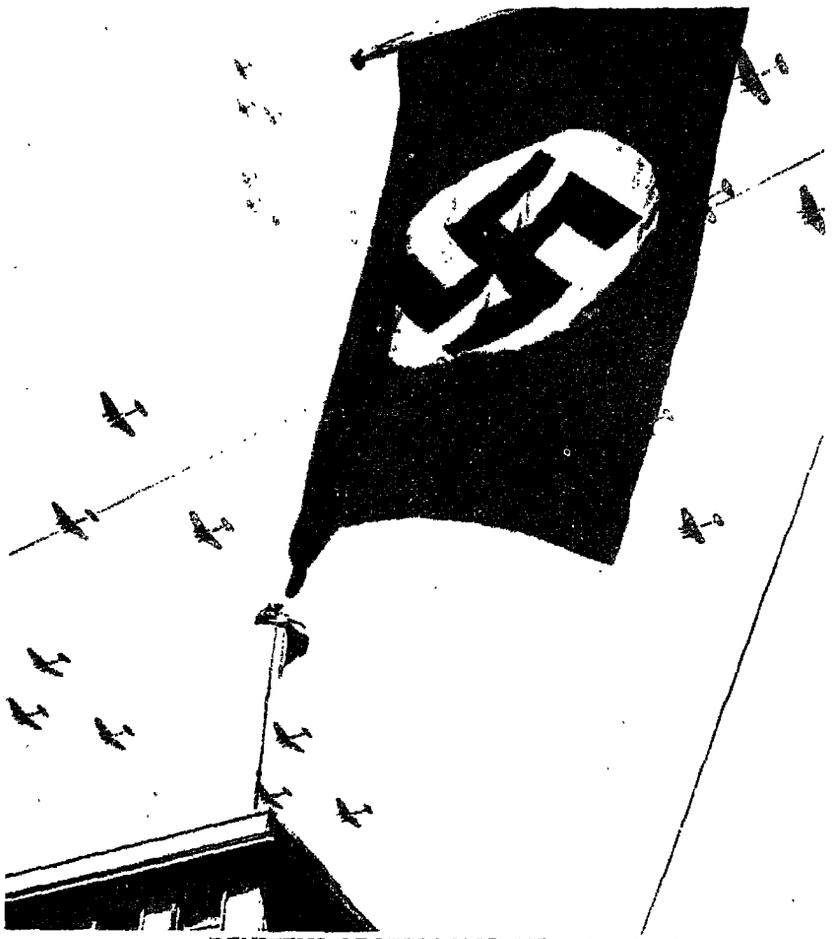
It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that until this date England and France had preserved an idle and foolish trust in the promises of the German Fuehrer Mr Chamberlain admitted in his Birmingham speech that "after Munich our defence programme was actually accelerated and expanded so as to remedy certain weaknesses which had become apparent during the crisis" The French Premier concluded his speech with the promise "I will take without delay grave military and extremely important economic



UNDER TWO FLAGS—SYMBOLS OF THE WARRING NAVIES

The top photograph of British battleships steaming in line ahead, shows an impressive fraction of that naval might which now, as at all times, has been the dread of our enemies Germany hoped to cripple it by her U-boats (lower photo), some of which are seen here at Kiel But these craft grew fewer every week

*Photos, Central Press, Planet News*



DENIZENS OF THE WARTIME SKY *Planet News; Central Press*

**The photograph above shows German bombers flying over Berlin during Hitler's 50th birthday celebrations. Their formation would not remain so perfect if they attempted to penetrate the balloon barrage now so familiar to Londoners. On the right some of these balloons are seen prior to hoisting.**

measures." The menace of a coming war cast its shadow upon Europe. In the background of both nations the foundations were laid of war industries of unprecedented magnitude, and France boldly and successfully set about the long-delayed and very difficult reform of its financial system.

One contrast between the German and the Allied procedure will be noted by the future historian. He may possibly reproach British and French statesmen with too great a confidence in human nature, even as it is embodied in Nazi leaders, during 1937 and 1938, but he will record that, while every step in the Nazi aggression was prepared by bribery and corruption and covered by pretexts of "necessity" and suppression of disorder, the British and French preparations for eventual conflict were not concealed from Germany, which had no real excuse for thinking, as it did think, that it might carry on indefinitely its career of "bloodless conquest." If it concealed from the German people, by its despotic control of the German Press, this rapidly increasing armament of the Western Powers and the plain determination to resist further aggression, the charge of deceit must fall entirely upon the German leaders.

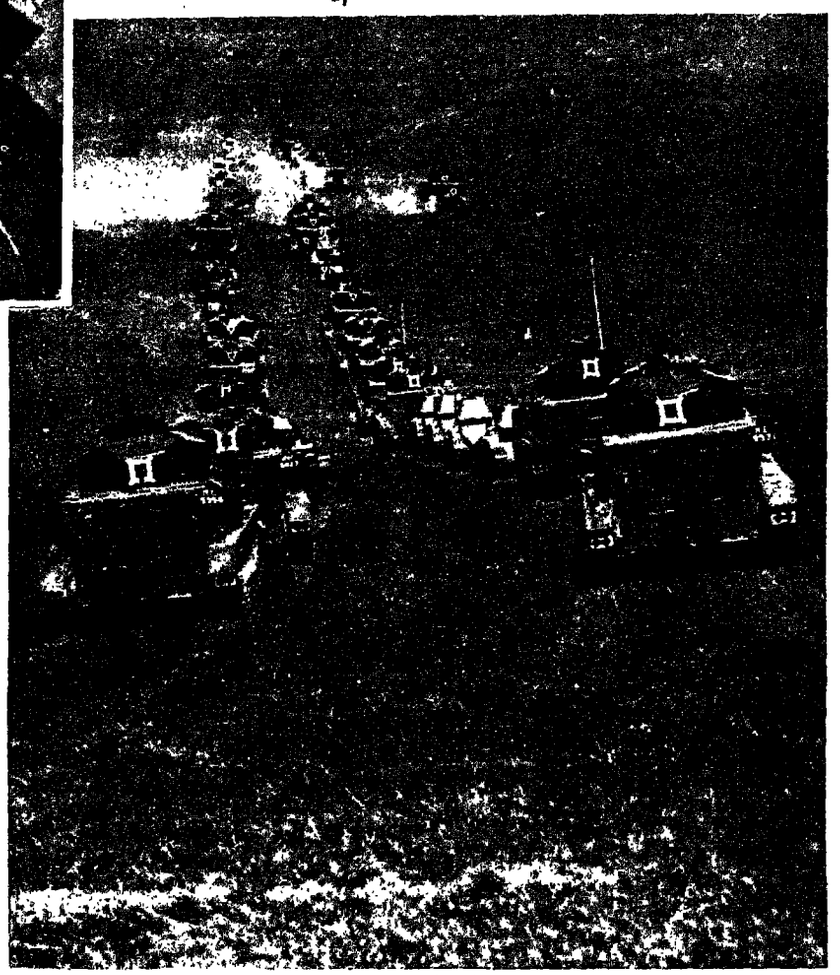
The steady and formidable progress of Great Britain in the construction of warplanes (which would clearly provide, with the co-operation of the French airfleet, a weapon that must give pause to any ambitious statesman by the autumn of 1939) was sufficiently known to the whole world. At the tenth Congress of the International Chamber of Commerce, which was held at Copenhagen in June, 1939, the summary figures for expenditure on armaments were presented. It is enough to notice that the very responsible speaker showed these representatives of forty nations that in France the share of the national expenditure devoted to defence and armaments had risen from 25 per cent. in the whole ten years before to 50 per cent. (estimated) in 1939. In Great Britain it had risen from 14 per cent. to 47 per cent. He further submitted that while Germany's military expenditure in 1939 represented 20 per cent. of its entire national income, and that of France about the same percentage, England's expenditure in that year was only 12 per cent. of its total national income.

To the men of great ability who, so to say, ran the national machine in Germany while the millionaire leaders pranced in the limelight, these figures must have suggested a grave situation. They would know that the figure tentatively suggested for Germany in 1939—20 per cent. of the national income—was far below the truth. Distinguished economists have concluded, after careful inquiry, that during the preceding ten years the German expenditure on armaments, on the military expenditure generally, had risen to about 50 per cent. of the entire national income. In simple English,



one half of the total wealth produced in a year by the hard-working and ill-fed population had gone into the jaws of the military idol, the Moloch of the modern world. The wealth-producing economy had been steadily weakened—the miners, for instance, had notoriously lost productive capacity from underfeeding—and there was a limit to what was in effect the slave-labour of transplanted Czechs and Poles. On the other hand England, with the second largest national income in the world and a productive machine that for years had not been employed to its full





**MIGHT ON THE LEASH**

**The weird figure above is a British anti-aircraft gunner "at the ready" beside his weapon. On the right we see a procession of tanks "somewhere in England," while below, men of Britain's new Militia are being given intensive gunnery training on the artillery ranges.**

*Photos, Topical; Fox; Planet News*

capacity, only began in 1939 to put such serious strain upon its resources as Germany had suffered for three years.

The shrewd middle-class men who work behind the façade of the more prominent Nazi politicians must have marked with anxiety the rapid preparing of Britain and France. Britain's remarkable progress in the construction of 'planes, for instance, was sufficiently made known by the Press to the general public, and its menace must have been very clear to the expert. The loud boasts of Field-Marshal Goering gave the world to understand that in a future war Germany would more than offset the preponderance of the British fleet by an overwhelming superiority in





**ALLIES IN CLOSE CO-OPERATION**

**For a long time before the war the allied Staffs of Britain and France were working in close touch. The photograph above, taken during French manoeuvres, shows left, General Gamelin, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied land forces, and right, M. Daladier, France's Premier; while between them, in optimistic mood, stands Mr. Hore-Belisha, Secretary of State for War.**

*Photo, Keystone*

aircraft. So the vast economic strength of Britain—her national income, or total production and wealth every year, is more than twice that of Germany—was harnessed to the work of creating one of the greatest air-fleets of our time.

**R.A.F. Expansion**

The phenomenal rate of expansion shows that for some years past Britain had not had such an innocent trust in Germany as the over-sanguine politicians and diplomats of that country imagined. While Herr von Ribbentrop flattered himself that he was throwing dust in the eyes of the British Government and people a formidable programme of expansion was quietly proceeding. The supremacy in the air which Britain had won in the last War had been completely forfeited by 1934. She had become then a poor seventh on the list of national air-strengths.

A plan of expansion was adopted which would add 71 squadrons to the Royal Air Force by 1937. The political development was closely watched, and in each successive year the programme was enlarged. In 1938, although much had been done, it was decided to build 2,370 first-class fighting 'planes by 1940. The regular force of 30,000 men of the year 1934 had become about 100,000 early in 1939, with auxiliaries and reserves amounting to a further 100,000.

This was at a time when Field-Marshal Goering was still boasting that his gigantic air-force would enable Hitler to continue to win bloodless victories. But the pace of Britain's expansion and the quality of the new pilots and mechanics were such after the annexation of Czechoslovakia that any normal-minded group of statesmen in the world would have been warned. By the early summer of 1939 Britain was spending £2,000,000 a week on aircraft-manufacture, or ten times as much as in the early days of the programme. Instead of the few hundred 'planes of 1935 Britain had—so much could be admitted—over 2,000 to meet the threat of an invasion of this country by Goering's vaunted fleet, and several hundred first-class machines for use abroad.

Different estimates are available of the quality of German aircraft and mechanical production generally, but it is no secret that Britain's more important machines are second to none in the world. The leading engineering firms, with their established repute for efficiency, concentrated their resources and inventiveness upon the task, and very large factories were built by the Government. Even the great ship-building firms like Harland and Wolff, and Denny's joined in the work. Britain, therefore, was ready at the beginning of September, 1939 with an enormous fleet which included many of the fastest and best aircraft for their particular jobs.

Lord Nuffield's genius and energy were engaged in the task of constructing a thousand Spitfire eight-gun fighters, reputed to be the fastest and most deadly in the world, reaching a speed of 362 miles per hour at a height of 17,500 feet. The Hawker Hurricane, of which hundreds were ready at the opening of the war, attained 335 miles per hour. The Hampden, with a speed of 265, had a range of 1,390 miles. The Wellington night-bomber, fully loaded, could fly to any capital in Europe at about five miles a minute. The Vickers Valentia could carry twenty-two infantrymen with packs and rifles besides its crew: the Bristol Bomber, twenty-four men.

These were no longer the speculations of designers and manufacturers. Non-stop flights and altitude flights had for some time past proved the capacity of the machines and the spirit of the men.

**Unity Britain's Asset**

Moreover, we must take into account the enormous advantage possessed by Britain in the unity and enthusiasm of the nation. It was estimated that something more than one half of the German people, and a very much higher proportion of the adults—for the twenty million or so genuine Nazis are, apart from paid officials, mostly the young folk—were opposed to Hitler and his policy. No man knew how many workers in the factory or even men in the forces were reluctant, and more eager to hinder than to help. The enthusiasm which drew a hundred thousand men voluntarily into the Royal Air Force and the unanimous support of the free workers of the Trade Unions constituted an asset which might count against a mechanical inferiority, if there were any. Add the ground defence force, the balloon barrages, and the countless batteries of anti-aircraft guns—second to none in the world—and we have some idea of the strength and the formidable potentialities of further strength with which Britain took up the challenge on that historic Sunday.

This is not yet the whole story. The Dominions were already co-operating in the creation of a defensive machine, and they responded immediately when Britain was compelled to take up the challenge. Offers of men and machines, whole squadrons of them, promptly arrived. Behind the home-land lay the splendid resources of our Empire. Britain was not merely prepared : it had vast untapped stores of strength, while Germany was bound to see her resources dwindle the longer the war lasted.

It need hardly be said that the Fleet was ready. Such is its tradition that that is somehow taken for granted. It is, in fact, an open secret that more than once in the year before war was declared sections of the Fleet cleared the decks for action in anticipation of a call which did not come until September 3.

No naval strategy even of the most tricky description could give the least hope to the German naval commanders. Britain's preponderance at sea was enormously greater than in 1914-18. She had thirteen capital ships to their five (two of which are "pocket" battleships), fifty-six cruisers to their eight, one hundred and seventy-nine destroyers—possibly in the present circumstances the most formidable item of all—to their twenty-one, and fifty-seven submarines to their seventy-one.

The Germans notoriously relied upon the latter, and upon a few ocean-going commerce-raiders which could not last long; but the first month of operations must have given them grave concern. In the fourth week only one small British ship fell victim to the submarines. The Fleet had taken up its stations before operations began, and the progress of scientific invention since 1914 gives a far greater advantage to detection than to the submarine. Readiness was seen, too, in the prompt adoption of the convoy system, a lesson learned so slowly and at so terrible a cost in the last war; trawlers, private yachts, etc., were quickly enlisted in the fight against the submarine and the unscrupulous and inhumane use made of that weapon by the German Admiralty. It was quite obvious that from the first day of war the Nazis made full and ruthless use of their under-water weapon, and the puny result which followed this attack was a remarkable tribute to the preparedness of the British Fleet.

The Army was equally prepared, in the chief manner in which this was necessary: with schemes for smooth and rapid expansion and for the transhipment of regular forces to France. Here, however, the burden fell chiefly upon France, and France was prepared. Beginning in 1938 its statesmen carried out with a courage new in recent French history the financial reforms which must be the foundation of defence. At the required moment France found the statesman, M. Daladier, who could procure a working unity of its political forces and ensure peace in its industrial sphere. Responding to his eloquent appeal, the country in the autumn accepted the financial measures of M. Reynaud, and the work of defence was accelerated.

**A Warning to Germany**

The Maginot Line became a warning to Germany to dream no more of a "lightning war," as far as infantry, tanks and artillery were concerned; and reforms in the army gave full effectiveness to the recognized fighting spirit and skill of the French soldier. The first month's operations on the Western Front were an undiluted triumph for French infantry and artillery.

The broader background of the situation was no less satisfactory. The long forbearance of Great Britain and France had its critics, but this was a weakness which was at once remedied when they took up the challenge on behalf of small and distant nations. Italy, after all the disquieting attitudes into which Germany had driven her, was won for neutrality, and France kept open its vital route to northern Africa. All the millions of marks and offers of trade-advantages which Hitler had showered upon neutrals alienated none from Britain. Turkey drew closer than ever. Egypt promptly announced its loyalty. Spain refused co-operation against France. It would seem, in fact, that Germany had not a genuine friend beyond her own borders, her "alliance of friendship"—with Russia—being an achievement of which the profit was disputable and the disadvantages obvious.

So on September 3, after repeated and most solemn warnings, after a final appeal for peace, the challenge of Germany to civilization was accepted by France and Britain. There have been many documents and speeches on the eve of war which the historian must censure, but the announcement (given in page 28) broadcast to the British nation by Mr. Chamberlain will pass with honour.

### *TO THE MAGINOT LINE BY UNDERGROUND*

**France's great bulwark of frontier defence is the powerful Maginot Line, equipped with the most modern devices. It was conceived by André Maginot, himself an ex-service man, when he was France's War Minister. The line is permanently occupied by specialist troops, who can be transported rapidly from one sector to another in secrecy and in perfect safety by means of the underground trolley system seen below.**

*Photo, Sport and General*



Chapter 5

# POLISH TRAGEDY: THE RETREAT TO THE RIVERS

*The German Onslaught—Heroic Defence of Westerplatte—Retreat after Futile Bravery—German Mastery in the Air—Fall of Czestochowa, Grudziadz and Bydgoszcz—Katowice and Cracow Surrender—Breakdown of the Polish Defence Plans—Withdrawal to the San—Germans Close in on Warsaw—Fall of Brest-Litovsk—Government Flees to Rumania—Russia Invades Poland*

JUST as the dawn was breaking on September 1, a wave of German aeroplanes suddenly appeared above Katowice and discharged a hail of bombs on the half-wakened city. They were the heralds of Herr Hitler, and the death and havoc they caused were the first fruits of his resolve "to put an end to this lunacy."

Before the day was much older many another of Poland's cities had received a similar savage visitation · the alarm bells rang in ancient Cracow just as centuries before they had sounded at the Tartars' approach, and the people of Warsaw. the capital, looked up from their breakfast-tables at the first of the innumerable raiders that the exponents of Nazi culture were to launch against them. Then, after a short but fierce bombardment of the border towns, great masses of German troops, long held in readiness for the day and hour of invasion, poured into Poland. The frontier guards put up what resistance they could, but their efforts were unavailing against the grey-uniformed flood.



LISH STAND

r, the heroic garrison of the Wester- ıdds. Above, the German army flag ıghold was finally captured. The l even by their enemies.

The onslaught came not from one direction only but from several. In the far north-west the invaders hastened to close the neck of the Polish Corridor, and many bodies of Polish troops were cut off. At Danzig, a little handful of Polish officials held out for a few hours in the Post Office; and at Westerplatte, the Polish naval base, or munitions dump, as it was variously called, a company of Polish soldiery put up a heroic stand for a week against combined attacks from air, sea and land. In the Hela peninsula, too, there was a small force which refused to surrender.

A second thrust at the Polish defence came from the north, where for months past Germany had been massing an army just across the frontier in East Prussia. Yet a third attack had to be met in Silesia in the south-west, while in the south there was an invasion from Slovakian territory now in German occupation. By the end of that first day of war fierce fighting was in progress on all fronts. Everywhere there was resistance; but everywhere, too, there was retreat, for the Polish High Command had failed to allow for the weight of numbers and still more of motorized material ready to be launched against them.

Hundreds of armoured cars, regiments of heavily armoured tanks; apparently inexhaustible hosts of aeroplanes; cavalry, too, and hordes of infantry—on they came, trampling down the Polish resistance. The Poles fought as bravely as they had ever fought in all the battle-strewn history of their race. But bravery, however desperate, is a poor defence against an armoured foe. Here and there the Polish cavalry, the pride of their army and people, made a gallant charge; but in 1939 it was even more true than in 1854 that such things, though magnificent, are not to be counted as war. In



UNDER THE HEEL OF THE INVADER

Lodz was the scene of some bitter fighting. Above, the German commander is seen taking the salute as his troops march into the town. On the right, a German sentry stands guard on the bridge over the River Vistula at Cracow.

*Photos, Central Press and Associated Press*

those futile " Balaclavas " thousands of Polish horsemen lost their lives.

In the air the invaders were masters from the first. The German air force had been claimed to be the largest in the world, and relays of bombers in formations of fifty raided the Polish cities every half-hour or so; there would seem to have been no attempt at discrimination between military objectives and open towns. Gun emplacements, troop concentrations, lines of entrenchments—these were mercilessly assailed; but so, too, were numerous towns and villages where there were no troops or guns, not even anti-aircraft defences. Far behind the battle zone the bombers pursued their campaign of death, and within the first 24 hours it was officially announced by the Poles that the enemy had bombed a score and more of open cities, including Warsaw, Cracow, Lublin and Lodz, and also numerous smaller places. Villages, farms, and even farm-carts had been attacked from the air, and the total number of civilian casualties was already running into thousands.

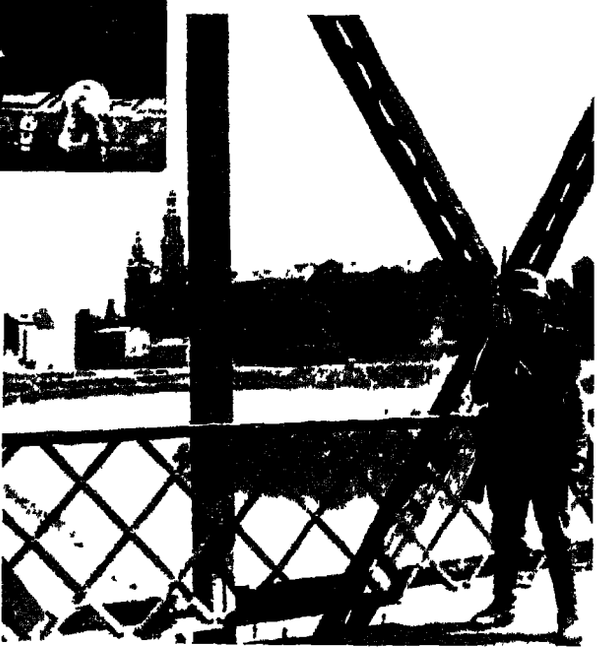
**Bombers' Campaign of Death**

Warsaw was visited time and again by the raiders—six times during the first day. Swooping down from the sky the sinister bombers strove to destroy the bridges across the Vistula, their progress watched by crowds of excited but apprehensive citizens who cheered madly as they saw Polish fighting 'planes engage the raiders and force them to retire. But they always came back again. On the Saturday there were nine raids; on subsequent days more still. . . . The German air force quickly gained the supremacy, and the Polish 'planes, far fewer to begin with, were sent down in flames or bombed to pieces on the ground. Here again individual bravery proved a poor match for mechanized efficiency.

On Sunday, Sept. 3, the news that Britain and France had fulfilled their pledges and were at war with Germany was received in Warsaw with delirious enthusiasm. The waiting crowds cheered, sang, and waved flags; then marched to the British Embassy to give an ovation to Britain's envoy, who stood on the balcony side by side with Colonel Beck and acknowledged their greetings. But as hour followed hour the news from the front became ever less reassuring. The Polish armies were retreating, it seemed, all along the line. Beyond a spectacular raid into East Prussia there was little to report of Polish successes. On the contrary, Czestochowa had fallen to the enemy—Czestochowa, the Polish Lourdes—and so the road lay open to Cracow. Grudziadz had been abandoned, and Bydgoszcz. Katowice was hard pressed and on the point of surrender.

Flushed with victory and increasingly conscious of their superiority in numbers and equipment, the invaders moved on. Here there was a fight, but the tanks and armoured cars soon cleared a passage for the infantry. There the Poles planned to make a stand, but the reconnaissance 'planes spied their fastness, and in a few minutes the bombers and big guns got to work.

Katowice surrendered on Tuesday, Sept. 5; and the following day Cracow, shrine of Polish culture, was compelled to admit the invader. The " industrial triangle " between Cracow and Warsaw was overrun, its defence having been completely disorganized by air attacks, delivered with little respite. The Corridor in the north had disappeared some days before, although there was still some fighting near Gdynia.



When they commenced the invasion the Germans were working to a time-table, but they soon found it had been constructed on an over-generous scale. Indeed, the occupation of Western Poland was carried out in a week—instead of a month, as had been arranged. The Germans had not overestimated the courage of their opponents; the Poles fought with tenacity and sustained bravery. Perhaps the invaders had not been too sure of the performance of their motorized columns, and certainly they were highly favo




**WARSAW'S CHEERS FOR ENGLAND**

When it was announced that Britain had kept her pledged word to go to Poland's assistance, Warsaw crowds paraded the streets with banners like the one above, which reads "Cheers for England!" while cheering crowds surrounded the British Embassy. A ruthless enemy soon carried out indiscriminate bombing of the city, and below a casualty is seen receiving attention

*Photos, Wide World, Planet News*



the weather. Sunny days and a dry wind made the roads of Poland first-rate for foot and wheeled traffic. The defenders, driven back and back, longed for the rains of autumn, which would quickly bring to their aid that mud which Napoleon learnt to dread. But no rains came. The sun continued to shine in blazing indifference to the tragedy that was working itself out on the mundane stage.

Despite the long chain of reverses the Polish spirit remained unbroken, and those who heard of the battle only from afar spoke confidently of ultimate success. They tried to see in the retreat a withdrawal according to plan. They thought of the ever-lengthening lines of communication, and surmised a trap laid by the wily Pole for the overbold invader. Then, as the armies drew nearer to Warsaw, they spoke of the country's traditional line of defence formed by the rivers Vistula and Bug. *There*, they argued, the Polish High Command must be intending to make a stand; *there* they will dig in for the winter and wait until the Allies in the West can render them some really effective assistance.

If this were indeed the Polish plan, it was rendered exceedingly difficult, if not impossible of execution, by the capture of Cracow and the consequent opening up to the invader of the east bank of the Vistula and of the line of approach to Przemysl, Lwow and the Galician oilfields. However, the withdrawal to the banks of the river San, which followed Cracow's capture, had at least the advantage of shortening the line to be held by the Polish armies; but it was not long before the principal bridgeheads on the river were threatened by the German advance guard.

Such, then, was the position ten days after the war commenced. The Nazis had made vast conquests of Polish territory: the Corridor had been wiped out, practically the whole of Western Poland was in enemy occupation, as well as the Silesian coalfield and the industrial area of the south-west. Opposite Warsaw a considerable salient extended into the German lines, and at 'Gdynia and one or two other isolated centres resistance was still continuing behind the German front. The pincers were closing in on Warsaw, but every day's delay meant a day nearer winter, with its probable slowing-up of the Nazi war-machine.

**The Menace to Warsaw**

There was as yet no evidence that the Polish army was in any degree demoralized or even much disorganized. No army can fight a succession of rear-guard actions without loss, but the small number of prisoners claimed by the Nazis suggested that no battle on a really large scale had yet been fought. Later it was revealed that this paucity of prisoners was very largely due to the fierceness of the actions in which the troops had been engaged: the Germans declared that the Poles fought with such obstinate bravery that they were obliged to slay them nearly all before they could seize the positions they occupied. It was a war to the knife, in which mercy was neither sought nor given.

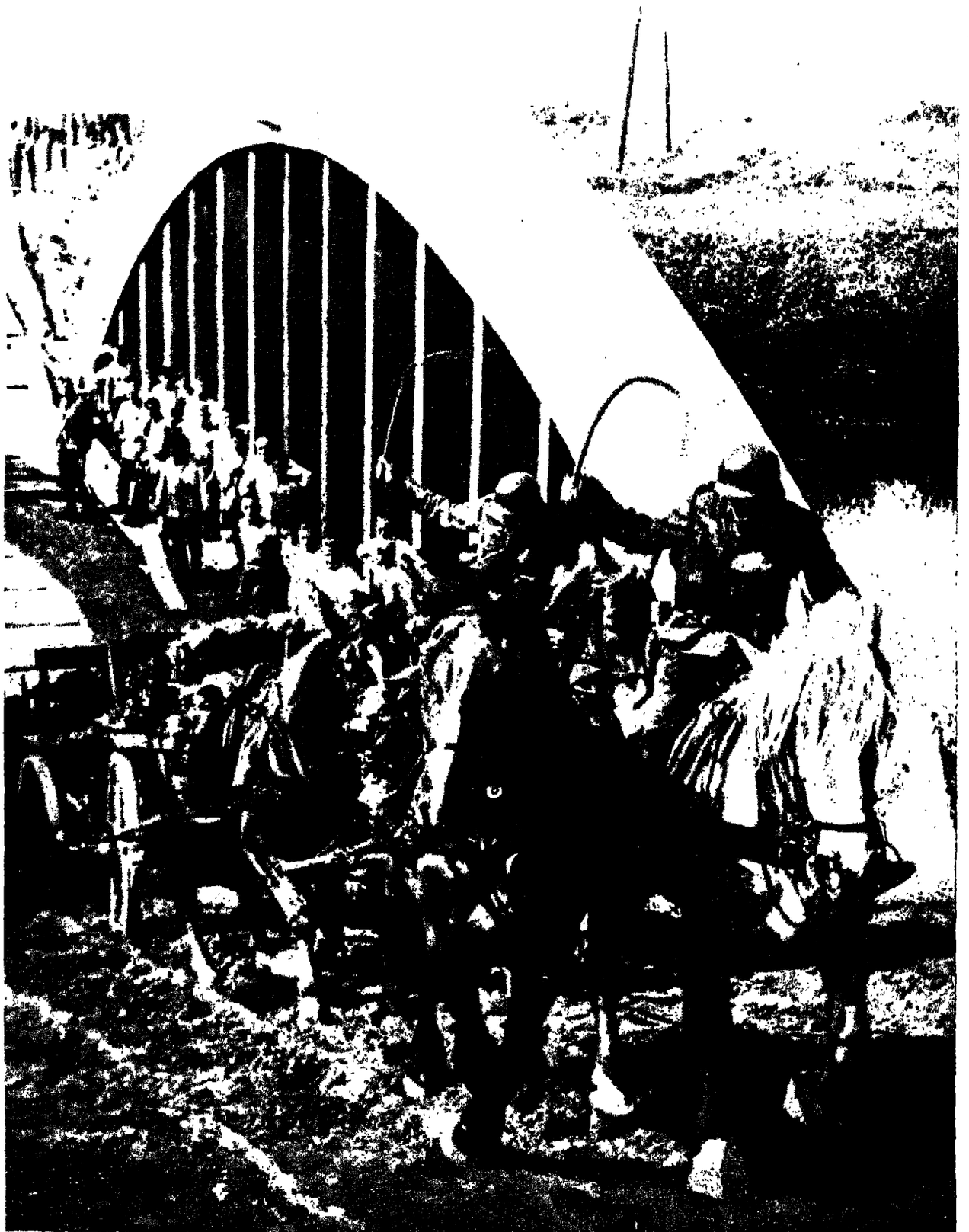
Of disorderly retreat, still less of complete rout, there was not a word. No stream of deserters shuffled through Warsaw's streets or spread dismay in



*Fox Photos*

RAIDERS PASSED—RUINS REMAINED

Both before and after the fall of Warsaw Hitler proclaimed that he had scrupulously respected non-combatant lives and property other than military objectives ; but photographs issued by his own propaganda ministry gave him the lie time and again. Here, for instance, is a typical Warsaw scene : a block of flats in the suburbs razed to the ground by Nazi bombers.



HEAVY GOING FOR GERMAN ARTILLERY IN POLAND

Though this Polish river is crossed by a fine modern concrete bridge, the road is poor and far from equal to the burden imposed by the ebb and flow of war traffic. This gun team is finding it heavy going even in the fine dry weather conditions, and the drivers are having to use the whip.

*Photo, Wide World*



*Planet News*

## NAZI BOMBERS PASSED THIS WAY

Above can be seen the havoc wrought in a suburb of Warsaw by incendiary bombs dropped from German warplanes. The destruction was thorough and systematic, and the fact that this district was undefended and contained no military objectives did not deter the Nazi airmen from reducing it to ruins, regardless of the lives of women and children. The man on the right, helping to fight the flames, is a butcher whose little daughter perished.

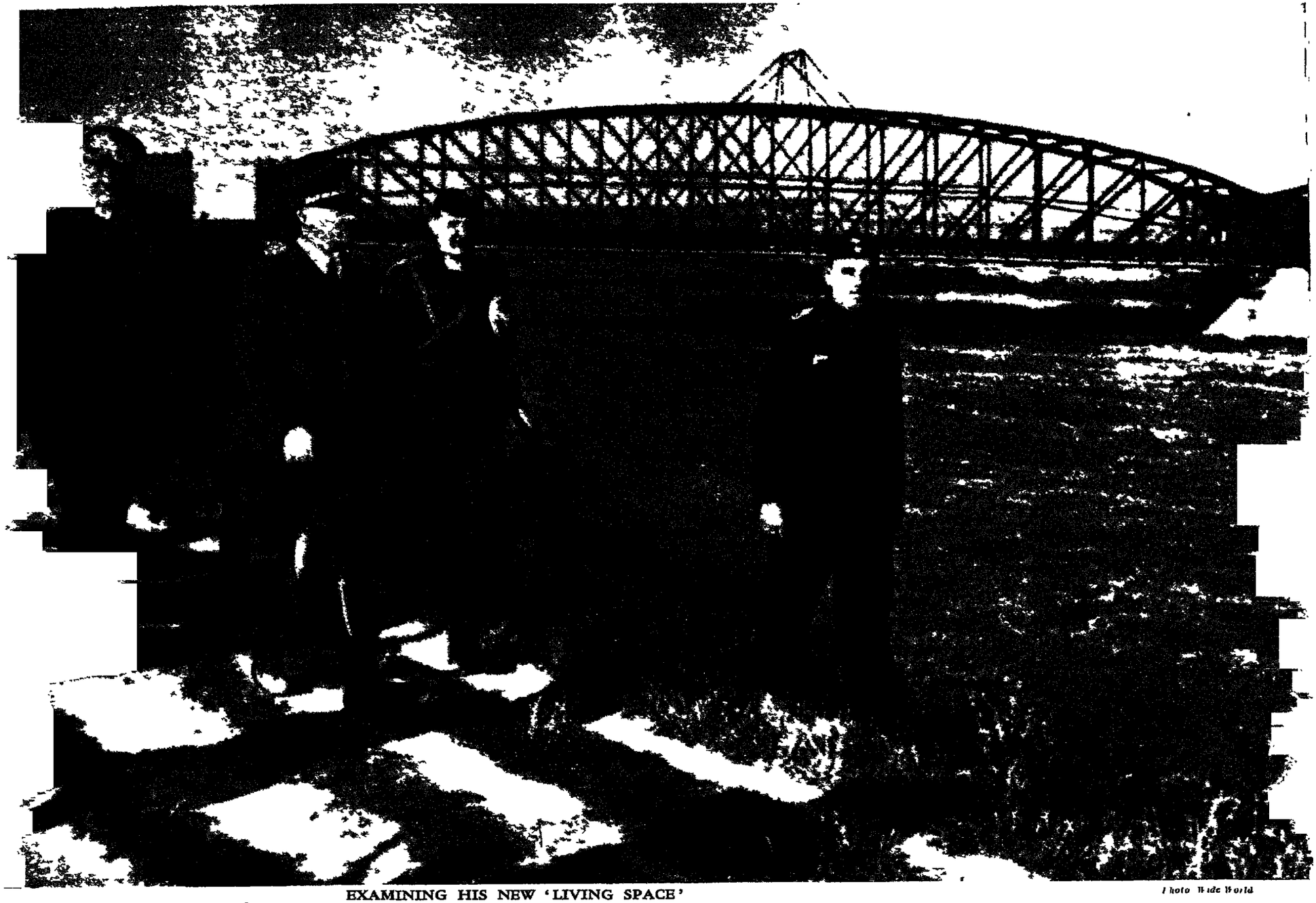


Photo Wide World

## EXAMINING HIS NEW 'LIVING SPACE'

Soon after the outbreak of the war against Poland, Hitler went to the Eastern Front to see for himself that operations were proceeding according to plan The photograph above, which shows him walking along the banks of the Vistula, was taken on September 11, 1939 The Vistula, over 600 miles long, by the Fourth Partition of Poland became a German river, it is of great commercial value, carrying a large volume of merchant traffic from the interior to Danzig and the Baltic

the villages behind the line The Poles seemed to be retreating according to plan and to be succeeding in keeping their main body intact ready for that counterstroke which should reverse the record of the fight Later it transpired that there had never been any real opportunity for a counter offensive, nor did the means exist of making one

From very early in the struggle the Polish High Command, under Marshal Smigly Rydz, Pilsudski's successor upon whom so many hopes were centred, had ceased to function Driven from place to place by the Nazi bombers—the way in which the successive retreats were discovered and demolished by the enemy suggested that spies were active—the High Command perforce had to abandon the direction of the fight to the local generals Even their wireless was bombed out of action, and they were generals without an army who at length sought refuge in flight across the frontier in Rumania

That was not yet, however For the present the Polish armies were gathered about Warsaw with their backs on the line of the Vistula, Bug, and San There they at least attempted a stand The German drive on Warsaw was checked and so, too, was an attempt at reaching Lwow with a motorized column The situation was critical, however, and no one was surprised to learn that the Polish Government had resolved to shift the capital to Brest-Litovsk some hundred miles to the east

Taking advantage of the pause in the attack the Poles did their best to consolidate their lines about Warsaw Polish forces which had been almost surrounded by the enemy managed to fight their way through the investing lines and establish contact with the main body of the Polish army standing before the capital A desperate battle was in progress on a front of some fifty miles between Lodz the Manchester of Poland ' and Plock (on the right bank of the Vistula, 60 miles N W of Warsaw), and the Poles claimed to have recaptured the former city after it had fallen to the invaders

Farther south there was little to report, but here again the Polish High Command seemed to be taking an optimistic view of the situation There had been, and still was, heavy fighting, but the line of the Vistula-San held fast





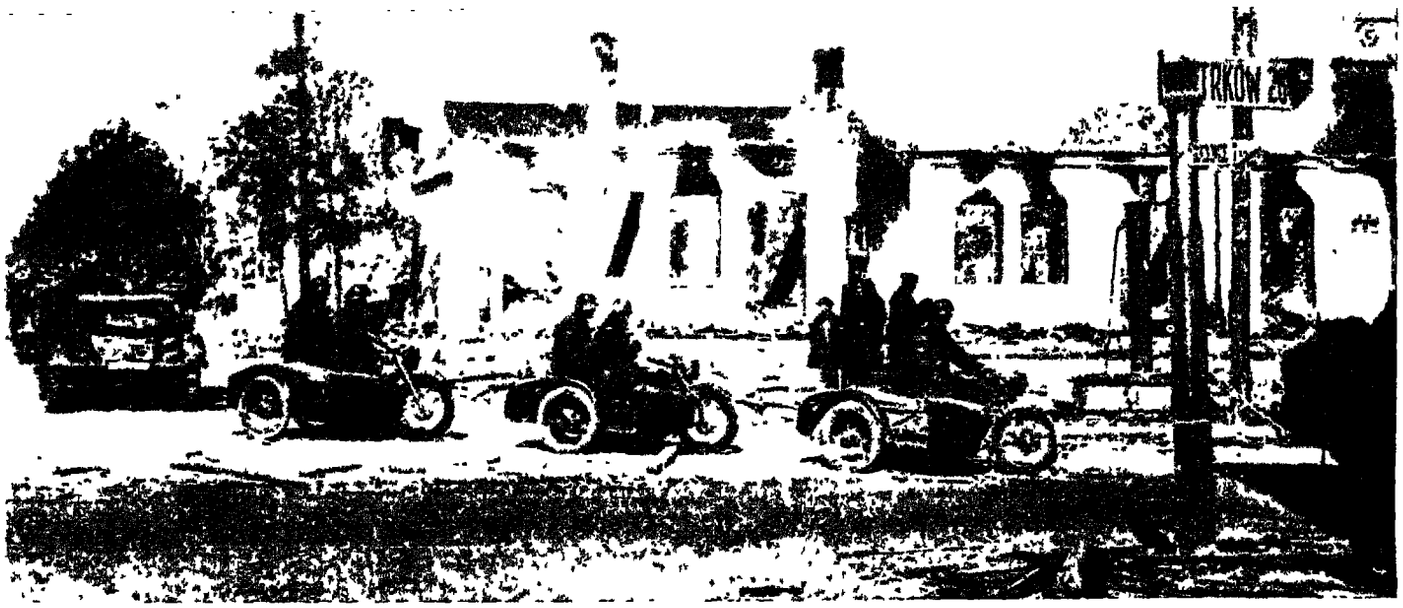
**WRECKAGE AND RETRIBUTION**

**From the very outset of hostilities Warsaw was heavily bombed from the air, and the photograph above shows what houses on the outskirts of the city looked like once the bombers had passed But these raids were not accomplished without the loss of many German planes, the wreckage of one of which is seen in the top photograph**

***Photos, Wide World, Planet News***

But the breathing space was but for a moment Soon there came news of renewed German drives—towards Modlin, fifteen miles from the capital, to the north-east towards Bialystok, and in the south across the San

"The northern and southern wings of the German army have continued the rapid pursuit of the enemy," said Berlin ' The Polish army group surrounded north of Radom has ceased to exist German detachments pushing forward on both sides of Przemysl have taken Sambor and Jaworow, while advanced units have reached Lwow" This latter claim was denied by the Polish High Command, but there could be little doubt that the invaders were again sweeping ahead, and that the resistance offered to their advance was crumpling beneath the vigour and weight of the assault Thus at Radom the Germans claimed to have taken 60,000 prisoners of war, including several generals, 143 big guns and 38 tanks So far had the tide of battle



THUNDERING BY IN THE 'LIGHTNING WAR'

The numbers and efficiency of the German mechanized columns, an essential factor in the German policy of a "Blitzkrieg," were instrumental in maintaining a rapid advance through Polish territory. Part of such a column is here seen on the move through a shattered Polish village.

moved that on September 13 the Fuehrer himself paid a visit to Lodz, and, continued the Nazi communiqué, "after the visit he continued his tour of inspection of troops on the eastern front, paying a special visit to the troops who have recently been engaged in victorious skirmishes against encircled Polish units who were making a desperate attempt to break through. The whole advance on Lodz was carried out so rapidly that the sacrifice of the civilian population was in many cases completely avoided. In the region visited by the Fuehrer not a house is destroyed. The peasant population is once more busy in the fields with harvest work."

On Wednesday, Sept. 13, the German High Command announced that in future open towns and villages would be bombed if there were the slightest show of resistance; the "obstinate civilian resistance" must be crushed. The announcement meant little change in actual practice, for from the first day of war undefended towns and villages had been ruthlessly bombed, but it was taken as an indication of the German resolve to bring the campaign to a speedy and triumphant close.

Swift progress was made in a great encircling move about Warsaw, and renewed attacks were made on Lwow by motorized forces. On Friday, Sept. 15, just a fortnight after the war began, the Germans claimed to have surrounded Warsaw and to have captured Gdynia, and the next day their claims extended to Przemysl and Bialystok. At the same time their troops, so the communiqué ran, were not far from Brest-Litovsk.

It was the beginning of the débâcle; confirmation of the fall of Brest-Litovsk was convincing proof of the virtual collapse of the Polish front, for this important city lay far behind what was hoped would be the line of resistance during the winter. Bombed and shelled, sprayed with machine-gun bullets and dispersed by tanks, the Polish army was reduced to a collection of isolated forces, fighting desperately against overwhelming odds. None knew where the High Command was situated or whether it were still in existence; even the location of the front line was often a matter of conjecture, and the Poles were indebted to the Nazi wireless for information concerning the whereabouts of their comrades as well as of the enemy.

Soon demoralization followed in the wake of disorganization and disruption. Travellers at the Rumanian frontier towns reported seeing in the Polish roads leading to the rear innumerable motor-cars and taxicabs loaded with officers with their families and luggage. On Sunday afternoon the Polish Government, which had established itself at Kuty, close to the frontier, began to cross into Rumania, and their example was followed by numbers of Polish troops, both officers and rank and file. So the rot developed.

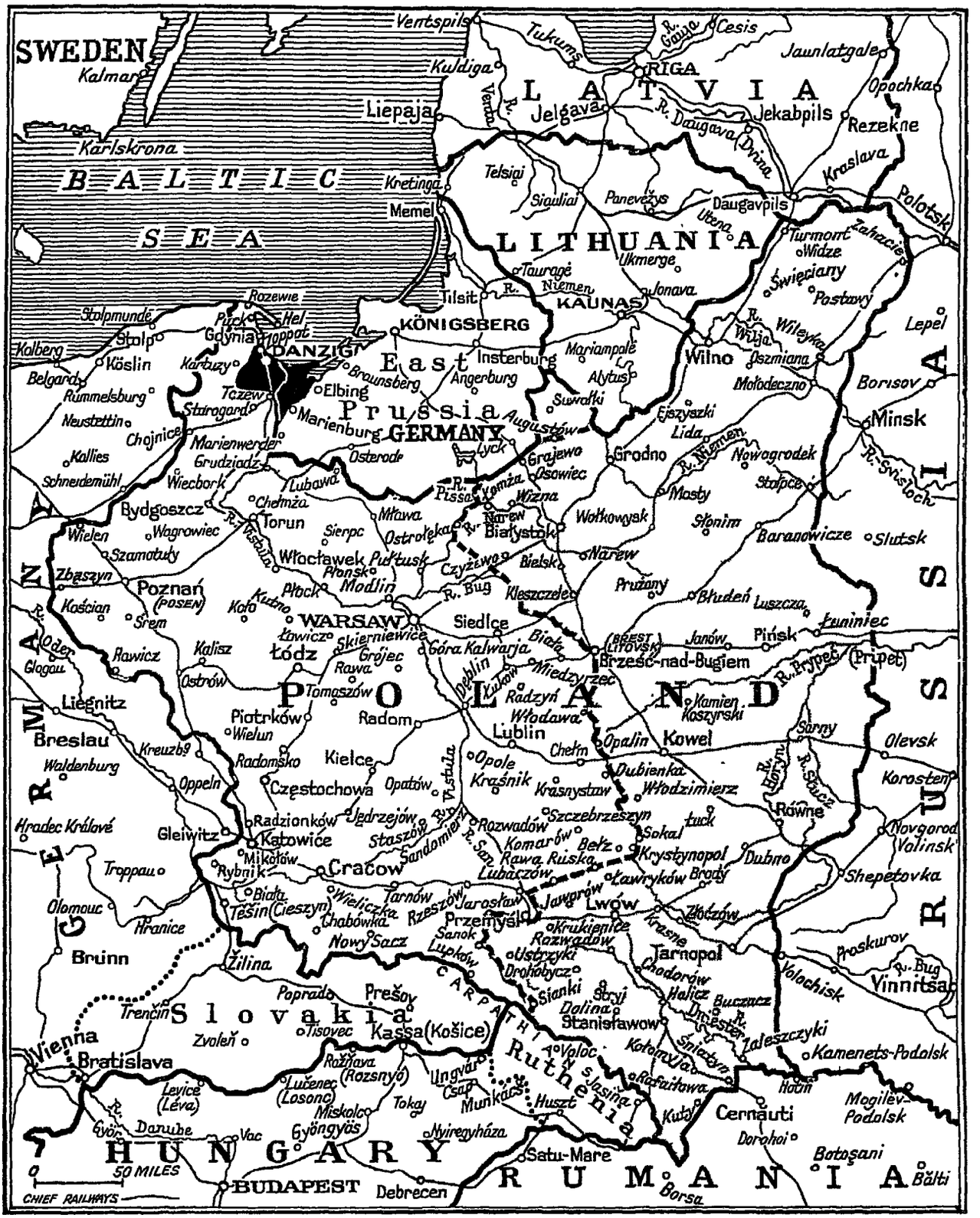
This was the moment chosen by Stalin for his attack on a peaceful neighbour engaged in a death grapple with a hugely powerful aggressor.



WHAT FATE WILL BE THEIRS?

The photograph above shows lorry-loads of Polish workers who have been taken prisoner during the German advance. To what destination they are bound, or what fate awaits them, no one knows. They are, for the time being, men without a country, herded together and carried off in trucks like cattle at the whim of the invader.

*Photos, International Graphic Press*




## THE FOURTH PARTITION IN POLAND'S HISTORY

Poland s history has been a series ot vicissitudes—of invasions, revolts and partitions by force For over a hundred years, after the Third Partition in 1795, Poland lay dismembered under the sovereignty ot foreign powers In 1919 the republic of Poland was formally recognized and her boundaries defined. In September, 1939, her territory was seized and divided by the brute force of her stronger neighbours. The map above shows the new Partition, the lightly shaded portion being the Nazi share and the darker portion that of Soviet Russia The new frontier runs along three rivers and would seem to have put an end to the German hope of domination in the Ukraine.

## *Historic Documents. V and VI*

# *TRIBUTES TO POLAND'S HEROIC STRUGGLE*

On September 7, 1939, Mr. Chamberlain sent a message to the Polish nation through their Ambassador, Count Edward Raczynski, on the occasion of the inauguration of news in Polish by the B.B.C. Two days later Count Raczynski himself broadcast to the British people on the sufferings of his country.

THE PRIME MINISTER on September 7, 1939:

WE in Great Britain are watching with profound admiration the heroic struggle of the Polish forces against the enemy invading their land. Great Britain and France have entered the war with the determination to aid with all their power the resistance of Poland to aggression. They are strengthened by the knowledge that they are fighting for things that are greater than the interests of any one country—for honour, justice and the freedom of the world.

Those who have taken up arms in such a cause are assured whatever sacrifices they may be called upon to make, of victory in the end.

COUNT EDWARD RACZYNSKI broadcasting, September 9, 1939:

GERMANY attacked Poland suddenly and without any declaration of war on Friday, September 1, in the early hours of the morning. This date will go down in history as a day of shame for the aggressors and as the opening of a new chapter in the life of Europe.

Since that day my country has been incessantly battered by practically the whole of the German army and continuously bombed by its entire Air Force . . . The losses suffered by Poland in territory and economic resources are certainly great, and owing to the crushing superiority of the enemy in equipment the Polish armies have not had as yet a chance of making full use of their skill and daring of manoeuvre . . .

Why do men of many nations declare their support for the Polish cause? Because there never was a clearer case of unprovoked aggression than that of September 1. No complicated quarrels divided us from Germany. On the contrary, we had a solemn non-aggression pact with the Third Reich, valid until January, 1944. We had no need to establish a case, to compile documents and evidence in order to convince our own people and the world of the justice of our cause. There was no need for propaganda of any kind. Rather the reverse happened, for the Government felt it to be their duty to keep the country calm in the face of brutal provocation, to keep down incidents, and not to give Herr Hitler any excuse for starting a quarrel.

### Hitler's Attempt to Justify Aggression

THE one excuse invented by the fertile brain of the German Fuehrer was the alleged maltreatment of the German minority in Polish lands. The excuse is poor and the accusation is slander. All who knew the position of the German minority in Poland, small in numbers but enjoying an important status due to its money power and to the spirit of tolerance displayed by Poland, stand amazed at the impudence of German mendacity. And this impudence shows no signs of abating. Even today, when the excuse for brutality and aggression could, it seems, be dispensed with, when the real aims of Germany have been disclosed for everyone to see, the German propaganda machine does not stop hammering out the most inept, the most ludicrous lies about Polish atrocities . . . May I take this opportunity to utter before the whole civilized world the most solemn protest against the calumnies with which the aggressor attempts to besmirch the good name of the Polish nation?

But the day of aggression was fixed by the enemy beforehand with ruthless precision. It was known to be planned for the beginning of September, and some excuse or other had to be found by that time. When Nazi Germany struck at Poland with all her might, Poland had no choice but to take up arms in defence of her independence. We had to defend our right to live as free men on our own soil and to save our homes and families from Nazi violence.

It seems the simplest thing that could be done to defend the homes of Poland against a cruel and unscrupulous aggressor. And yet, by doing it, Poland turned a new leaf in recent European history. For Poland was the first nation which dared to defy Hitler's challenge and meet his attack with fire. This act of courage, which has already cost Poland the lives of many of her best sons, and the devastation of some of her provinces and towns, was a great service rendered to all the free nations of the world. The time was bound to come when the Nazi methods of extortion would meet with strong resistance. But the fact is that Poland was the first nation to do it and she accepted an unequal struggle rather than join the ranks of those who allowed themselves to be the victims of Nazi blackmail.

The daring step of Poland, who took up the German challenge and made a stand in the defence of freedom, had a world importance. It was the signal for all the free nations of the world to get together and fight the system which means slavery both for the German people itself and for all the nations within the reach of the Nazi power. Someone had to be the first to say *No* to Herr Hitler and bear the consequences. In spite of the untold sufferings endured in the last week by the Polish nation, no one in Poland regrets the fateful decision made by the Government when it refused to submit to Hitler's tyranny . . .

### Europe Supports the Fight for Freedom

THE case of Poland is crystal clear, and that is why it has universal support throughout the world. President Roosevelt was among the first to declare that Poland was invaded and had become the victim of an unprovoked aggression. By refraining from offering any provocation and by observing self-control, difficult under the circumstances, Poland presented the Allies with a priceless gift—an impregnable case and a perfectly clear conscience. They can now go into battle certain that no effort was spared by Poland, the immediate victim of aggression, to avoid the calamity the causing of which seemed to be Herr Hitler's particular desire and aim. The old friend of Poland, France, and her new ally, Great Britain, knew that by helping Poland they were defending liberty and they knew that no cause could be more popular among the nations of the world than that of freedom, which Poland symbolizes in her struggle against the Nazi invasion.

They also knew that Poland's spirit will not break down under the strain, and that she is going to remain faithful to her traditions and her Allies whatever happens and however the fortunes of war may vary. Poland is one of the limited number of great historic nations of Europe, and she would not be true to herself if she acted differently.

History has proved that a nation like Poland can be neither destroyed nor permanently oppressed. In the present situation it is to be noted that Poland is stronger today in body and in spirit than she ever was during the last two centuries at least . . .

The leading principle of Marshal Pilsudski's teaching was that every nation must rely on its own strength, both moral and material. He taught the Poles to believe that in the long run only nations which are internally strong and capable of dealing with any situation can survive in the terrible struggle of which Europe is the scene today. That is why Poland is aware that, although she has faithful and powerful Allies, she will have to strain all her forces to achieve a victory which would be her own. The existence of a strong Poland has been proved to be an essential condition of lasting peace in Europe, and the enemies of peace must have realized it, since they aimed at Poland their first and heaviest blow.

WE are all determined to carry the struggle on to the end and until a complete and decisive victory. Poland was the first nation to defy the Nazi menace. She is still bearing the whole weight of the German force, and she will not rest until the freedom of all the nations of Europe, including her own, is made entirely secure against any danger of invasion or foreign domination.

Chapter 6

# AMERICA LOOKS ON: THE CLASH OF SENTIMENT AND POLICY

*Reactions to the European Crisis—The Move to Repeal Arms Embargo—Keeping U.S.A. out of the War—German-Soviet Pact and its Portent—Roosevelt's Moving Appeal to the Powers—President's Plea for Restriction of Air Bombing—Torpedoing of the "Athenia"—Congress Debates Neutrality Law*

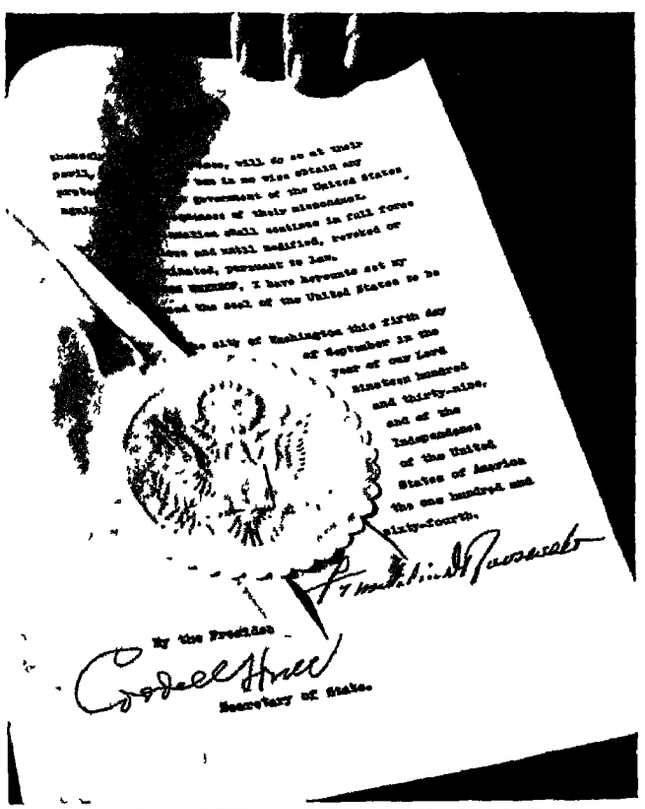
WHEN yet another international crisis arose in August, 1939, to be followed so soon by the opening moves of the war, the reactions of the United States to European affairs naturally assumed a new importance to us. What was the effect in America of events in Europe after the middle of August? What part would the United States play? These were natural questions, prompted as much by the British sense of community with the wealthiest of the democracies as by the narrower considerations of self-interest.

The first step to an understanding of American reactions is the realization that, though Americans might be in the same boat as the British, we and our Allies planned the perilous voyage, and must make ourselves responsible for reaching its destination. A review of American expressions of opinion will show that they see and feel things much as we do, but it behoves us to understand that some of their difficulties are peculiar to the United States. The position of the United States in relation to Great Britain is not unlike Great Britain's in relation to Europe in peacetime. Ideals and material interests make it the friend of the non-aggressive and threatened nations and consequently the enemy of any dominant Power that threatens their integrity and flouts the sanctions of international law. Only the necessity of intervening to stop the aggressor's career of ruinous conquest drove Great Britain into war again. The peoples of the British Empire desired peace and would have preferred to help the peaceful and threatened nations by trade agreements, loans, and the supply of arms. Indeed, this was Britain's policy in Europe until the recrudescence of pan-Germanic imperialism under the unscrupulous Nazi regime called urgently for direct intervention. And this was precisely the inevitable attitude and destiny of the United States.

Americans believed with their British cousins that the victory would be inevitably to the economically powerful and non-aggressive Allies: the haves are always bound to defeat the have-nots in the modern world, for even the armaments of war depend upon industrial and economic resources. Therefore British people should realize that the desire of the United States to help the Allies without departing from legal neutrality was not merely typical of normal British policy in Europe, but was based upon well-informed opinion that within the legal bounds of neutrality the United States could ensure the ultimate victory of the Allies simply by letting them buy from America what they require.

Granted the community of ideals and interests, there was nothing surprising in the crystallization of American opinion in favour of the Allies. A series of aggressive and illegal acts by Germany after the annexation of Austria in the spring of 1938 roused political feeling in the United States, until at last European affairs began to eclipse purely American politics, which up to the spring of 1939 raged around the New Deal legislation. The tale of Nazi aggression, reaching a climax in the treacherously prepared attack upon Poland, brought the American public to a fever pitch of interest as well as undisguised partisanship, so that in the last week of August the National Broadcasting Company (only one of many in the States) broadcast more than 200 special news bulletins about the crisis and took 95 direct broadcasts from Europe. The press of America was flooded with European news. On August 29 an American commentator flew to England to "cover" the foreseen outbreak of war.

When, after a year of futile indignation and growing uncertainty, Britain found herself irrevocably at war, almost every one was relieved: paradoxically, in our minds we were at last peaceful; but our American friends were thrown into even fiercer political turmoil. All the muddled arguments of the various types of pacifists as to the best way to defend the cause of peace, which with us in Britain had faded away into nothing with the terrible *fait accompli* of war, gained fresh ardour and strange new platforms. A series of unofficial but scientifically conducted ballots had reflected the strong movement of public opinion against Germany



NEUTRALITY SIGNED AND SEALED

As soon as war broke out between Nazi Germany and Britain, France, and Poland, a Neutrality Proclamation was drawn up and signed in Washington by President Roosevelt and his Secretary of State, Mr. Cordell Hull. The seal and signatures on the last page of this document are shown above.

*Photo, Keystone*



THOSE IN FAVOUR OF HELPING DEMOCRACY

Photos Wide World

Among the followers of President Roosevelt who advocated the repeal of the existing Neutrality Law were Elbert D Thomas (left), Democrat senator from Utah and an influential member of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee ; Rear-Admiral Yates Stirling (centre), who asserted that " American security depends on defeating the Dictators " ; and Hugh R. Wilson (right), former Asst. Secretary of State, who was appointed in 1938 American Ambassador to the German Reich. When war broke out in Europe many former opponents of revision swung round and favoured the policy advocated by the President, including many members of the Republican-Democratic bloc which had previously opposed him on this point.

and German propaganda, and revision of the Neutrality Law became the real issue.

As early as July, President Roosevelt had tried, and failed, to induce the legislature to remove the embargo on the export of arms and munitions to belligerents. Realizing that the repeal of the embargo could only be carried by linking it with the avoidance of war, Roosevelt and his followers took the line which was voiced on August 29 by Louis Johnson, the Assistant Secretary for War, who described the maintenance of the embargo as an encouragement to war. He was at once backed up by Senator Thomas of Utah, who predicted that Congress must repeal the embargo if a European war broke out. Before making this statement he had a talk with President Roosevelt, but the anxiety of the State Department was reflected in his denial of having discussed this vital issue with the President.

**The Arms Embargo**

Continued opposition from diehard Isolationists, and smaller groups of pro-Nazis, Communists, and the political riff-raff of "the radio priest," Father Coughlin, was rightly anticipated, but there was a new fervour among the extremists on the other side, and this was expressed also on that anxious 29th of August by Rear-Admiral Yates Stirling, addressing the Veteran Foreign Wars' Convention at Boston. American security, he asserted, "depends on defeating the Dictators when war starts, and one sure way to do that will be to go into the war at first. Framing the Neutrality Laws to keep us from war is like whistling in the dark or fiddling while Rome burns. There is only one way to keep us from war and that is for war not to happen. Therefore, instead of keeping out of foreign disputes that will affect our prosperity and security, we should go into them with both feet."

The same Convention was rather significantly addressed also in favour of removing the arms embargo by Mr. Hugh Wilson, the American Ambassador who had been recalled from Berlin the previous autumn and ever since had been consulted by the President.

The ground was thus prepared for Roosevelt's next move when war started. There had been ample indications of a change of heart among former powerful opponents of revision of the Neutrality Law, opponents who had in reality been previously expressing their political antagonism to the President and the New Deal. The Washington Correspondent of "The New York Herald Tribune," for example, asserted that leading members of the Republican-Democratic bloc, which had opposed President Roosevelt's wishes in July, had decided to change their attitude if war started, and support the removal of "the legal necessity for an automatic embargo on all shipments of arms, munitions, and implements of war." This was a reminder to the public that, as the law stood, even the orders for engines, aeroplanes, and parts, placed already with American manufacturers by the Allies, would have to be cancelled if the goods were not delivered before war started.

While the campaign for repealing the arms embargo, and the institution of the "cash-and-carry" plan, was in full swing, the United States public were vividly impressed by the events of the first weeks of war, and also by the growth of the crisis which immediately preceded the invasion of Poland.

**Reactions to Poland's Defeat**

The main impressions that the crisis made upon the American public began with the ominous intensification of Nazi press and radio attacks on Poland all through the second half of August. A long conference on August 21 took place at Berchtesgaden between Hitler, von Ribbentrop, and von Papen, German Ambassador to Turkey (and in the first Great War the German Ambassador to the United States until he was expelled). The fruit of this secret conclave was the sensational announcement that Ribbentrop was about to fly to Moscow to complete a non-aggression pact with Stalin. On the 22nd the last of the staff talks took place between Britain, France, and Russia.

Immediate reaction in the United States was expressed by "The New

York Times": "This is a heavy blow for the Poles if Germany moves. It creates a new problem and increases the risks to Poland's allies. The thought that the Nazis and Bolshevists are moving towards a natural alignment, and that great democracies, including our own, can no longer doubt where they stand in the 'line-up,' is no recompense for the danger such an alignment foreshadows for the Western Powers."

On August 23 the Soviet-Nazi pact was hurriedly signed. American press comment insisted that it affected the position of the United States, especially owing to the prospect of Germany getting supplies from Russia during a war. "The New York World-Telegram," for instance

**Reactions to the Pact**

"We shall be unneutral if we act, and we shall be unneutral if we do nothing whatever. By doing nothing we would actually be taking sides with Adolf Hitler. If war comes we are going to have to make up our minds which we prefer for our neighbours—peace-minded Britain and France or war-minded Fuehrer and would-be Teutonic Napoleon. We are going to have to do that and shape our neutrality accordingly."

It is noteworthy that the growing volume of critical comment dealt with Germany, and then with Russia, but ignored Italy. It seemed to be realized that after Hitler's annexations of Moravia, Bohemia, and Memel-land, Mussolini was supporting Germany only with propaganda which had lost its fervour

In the United States the orientation of Italy in the last war was remembered. *The opinion that Italy this time would* be bound once more to stay out if her bellicose ally plunged into war received a kind of confirmation from President Roosevelt's appeal to King Victor Emmanuel to use his influence for peace This, and a radio appeal from the Pope, were issued in Rome on August 25

The President, in his message, said

> It is my belief and that of the American people that your Majesty's Government can greatly influence the averting of an outbreak of war.
>
> 'Any general war would cause to suffer all the nations, whether belligerents or neutral whether victors or vanquished, and would clearly bring devastation to the peoples and perhaps the Governments of some nations most directly concerned.
>
> "We in America having welded a homogeneous nation out of many nationalities, often find it difficult to visualize the animosities which so often have created a crisis among nations of Europe which are smaller than ours in population and territory, but we accept the fact that these nations have an absolute right to maintain their national independence if they so desire.
>
> "If that be a sound doctrine, then it must apply to the weaker nations as well as the stronger. The acceptance of this means peace, because fear of aggression ends."

The President went on to recall his proposal made in April, that no armed forces should attack or invade the territory of any other independent nations, and, once this was agreed to, that there should be international conversations, in which the United States should take part, to solve the problems that barred the way to the peaceful economic life of *each nation. If the Italian Government* could formulate proposals for a peaceful solution, he promised the sympathetic support of the United States

The President's appeal carried a powerful suggestion into Italy of America's abandonment of its detached attitude to European affairs, and though such appeals were doomed to fall on deaf ears in Germany, the Italians understood, as they understood also the appeal of the Pope: "We beseech these rulers to abandon the policy of threat and mutual suspicion and to endeavour to solve the present difficulties with more loyal and straightforward methods." There was no longer any occasion for surprise that the Italian Government refused to take any initiative in military operations.

**President and Pope Appeal**

Still more pointed, for every U.S. citizen, was the communication to Hitler from Roosevelt, which was published on August 26. This quoted the satisfactory reply of Moscicki to Roosevelt's appeal for negotiating the questions at issue. It then addressed Hitler in these terms:

> 'Your Excellency has repeatedly and publicly stated that the ends and objectives sought by the German Reich were just and reasonable. In his reply to my message the President of Poland has made it plain that





**THESE MEN OPPOSED THE PRESIDENT'S POLICY**

*President Roosevelt's appeal to Congress on September 21, 1939, for the repeal of the existing Neutrality Law and the lifting embargo, was opposed mainly by the diehard Isolationists, on the grounds that a lifting of the embargo would lead to e ultimately to defending the debtor, if he needed help in war, on account of the large sums owed. Promi were Gerald P. Nye (right), Republican senator from North Dakota, and William E. Borah (left), Rep*

*Photos, Wide World*



**SPOKESMAN OF PEACE-LOVING DEMOCRACY**

President Roosevelt, seen above at his desk in the White House, proclaimed the neutrality of America on September 5, 1939, through the document illustrated in page 47. But though pledged to neutrality, the people of the United States are, as Roosevelt phrased it in his appeal to Hitler on August 25, "as one in their opposition to policies of military conquest and domination."

*Photo, Wide World*

the Polish Government is willing upon the basis set forth in my message to agree to solve the controversy which has arisen between the Republic of Poland and the German Reich by direct negotiation or through the process of conciliation.

"Countless human lives can be yet saved and hope may still be restored that the nations of the modern world may even now construct a foundation for a peaceful and a happier relationship if you and the Government of the German Reich will agree to the pacific means of settlement accepted by the Government of Poland. All the world prays that Germany will accept."

About the same date Mr. Anthony Drexel Biddle, U.S. Ambassador to Poland, presented President Moscicki with flags sent by each of the 48 States as a symbol of American sympathy.

The British Parliament assembled in special session passed an Emergency Powers bill without a division, and the Prime Minister announced: "The Government is determined to carry out its full undertakings to Poland." The British firmness was praised throughout America, but the chief Washington correspondent of "The New York Times," Arthur Krock, declared that the American Isolationists would be strengthened by the Russo-German pact, because "they will point to it as proof . . . that a scene where the balance can shift overnight, and long-declaimed policies be abandoned, is no territory for American intrusion."

The Germans, as we know, began their invasion of Poland and the bombing of open towns on September 1. On the same day that Germany invaded Poland the American President requested an immediate reply from Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany, and Poland, to his appeal that they should affirm their determination not to bomb civilian populations or open towns from the air so long as their opponents observed the same rules of warfare. The parties involved in the war all agreed, but Germany had commenced and maintained thereafter a ruthless bombing of civilians and open towns and villages in Poland, a fact which was confirmed by Mr. Biddle.

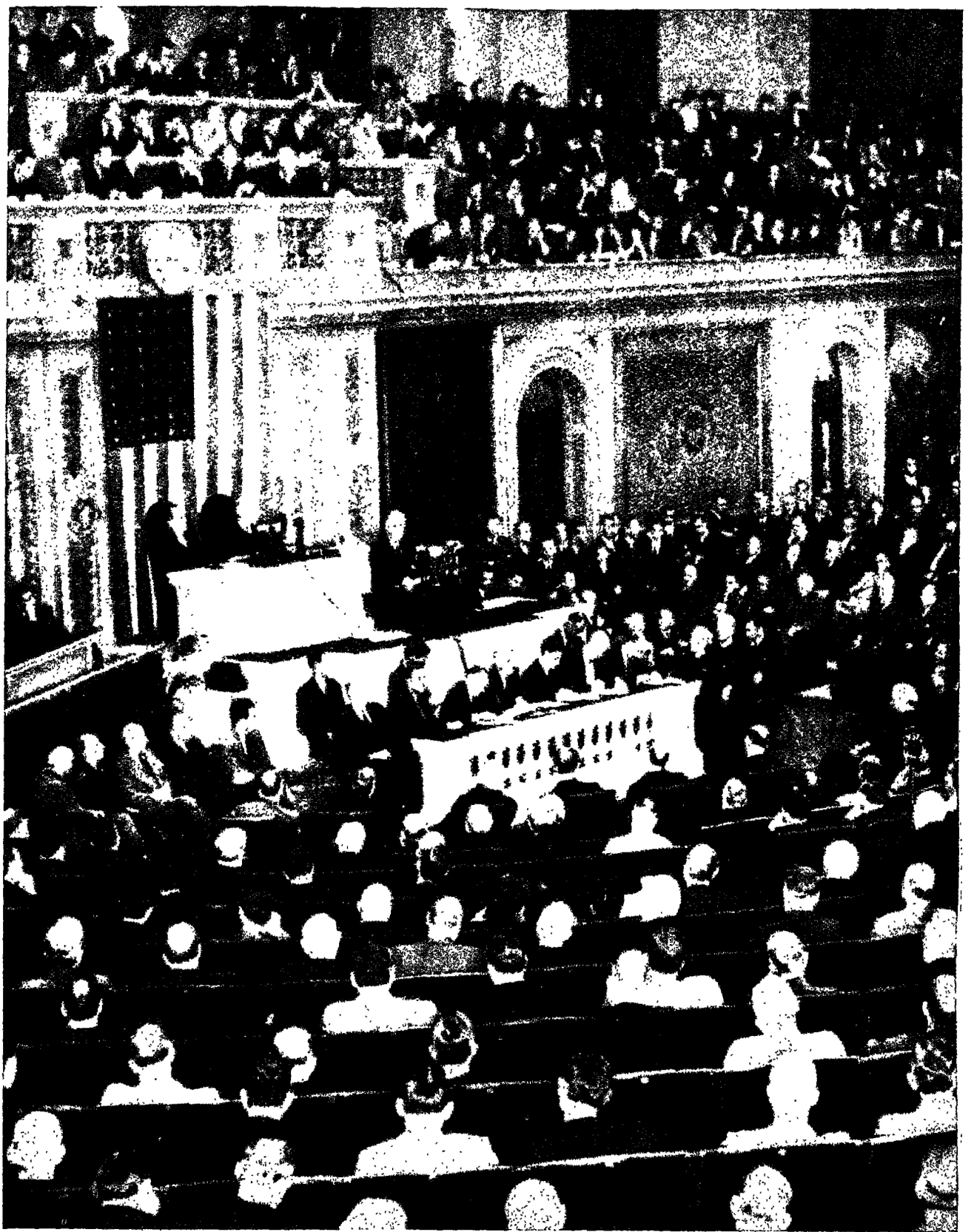
The course of the war thereafter merely confirmed the anti-Nazi sentiment of America, and while outrages such as the torpedoing of the "Athenia" inflamed American resentment against Britain's enemies, the mendacity of Nazi propaganda was completely exposed by its fantastically incredible and contradictory accusations and excuses. On September 4, the day after the "Athenia" was sunk, occurred the dashing attack by the R.A.F. on Wilhelmshaven and Brunsbüttel, providing an admirable contrast to the German warfare against civilians.

**Benevolent Neutrality**

But the aim of most Americans was still to keep out of the war. On September 5 the "Christian Science Monitor" declared that America was more clearly sympathetic with the Allies than it was just before the U.S. entered the last great war, "but there is also in America a resolve not to enter this war." That view was frequently repeated by politicians of all parties, from the President downwards. He had proclaimed American neutrality, as he was bound to, on September 5, by which enactment the embargo on shipments of war material to the Allies came into full force. This was a useful argument in the hands of his supporters, who saw in the existing Neutrality Law an unneutral and intolerable assistance to the aggressive land powers of Europe and a denial of Britain's legal advantages in commanding the sea routes.

The President opened the joint extraordinary session of Congress in the House chamber on September 21 with a call for "the repeal of this neutrality legislation and the return to international law." His speech certainly underlined one of the reasons why the way of the modern international transgressor is going to be hard. He proposed the fixing of war zones which American merchant vessels should not enter, broader authority to prevent American citizens travelling in ships of belligerents or entering danger areas (this would prevent Americans volunteering in belligerent forces), and what are known as the "cash-and-carry" provisions: (a) that belligerents purchasing commodities from the United States must buy such commodities before shipment, and (b) that war credits to belligerents for such purchases should be banned.

Without these provisions, whatever the President and some of his supporters might prefer, there was little chance of getting the embargo removed. Having described them, he continued: "These terrorist days demand co-operation



*Associated Press*

**ROOSEVELT CHALLENGES THE DIEHARDS**

Before Congress, convened in extraordinary session on September 21, 1939, President Roosevelt (shown above seated alone) urged the senators and representatives of the U.S.A. to repeal the arms embargo as being "most vitally dangerous to American neutrality, security and peace." Before a crowded chamber he stated that he could offer no hope that the "shadow over the world might swiftly pass."

between us without a trace of partisanship. Our acts must be guided by one single hard-headed thought—keeping America out of this war."

Listeners to the American wireless commentator, Raymond Gram Swing, heard his talk relayed by the B B C. on September 30, summarizing the progress of the anti-embargo campaign.

Mr Swing described how just as the forces of national unity seemed uppermost, an astonishingly powerful offensive set in, and expressed itself with such vigour that many Congressmen were intimidated for a time. The leaders of the opposition to revision were mainly the old Isolationists, and their principal argument was that lifting the embargo would lead to extending credit, and then to defending the debtors if they needed help in the war, because they owed so much. But Congressmen came to realize that the apparent force of the campaign by the "pressure groups" was largely "faked," and due to wholesale organizing of telegrams and postcards in favour of the embargo. College students and even school children had been recruited to sign these messages. Congressmen began once more to remember the carefully organized polls of public opinion, reflecting the overwhelming support of the people for the removal of the arms embargo. Moreover, President Roosevelt had deliberately made the question a non-party one and had conciliated some of the conservative Democrats with whom he had been in conflict. Father Coughlin was more than counterbalanced by the conversion of Senators and Congressmen who had previously been opposed to removing the embargo. Among them, and especially influential, was Al Smith, former Democratic candidate for the Presidency and severe critic of Roosevelt, regarded as the leading Roman Catholic politician in the States.

**Isolationists at Bay**

As the first month of the war drew to a close it became reasonably certain that the United States would shortly revise its Neutrality legislation to enable the Allies to purchase war materials from them. The Bill permitting this was approved on Sept. 28 by the Foreign Relations Committee by 16 votes to 7. The vote was a non-party one, and although the recalcitrant Isolationists still proclaimed their intention of fighting revision step by step, this legislative enactment became almost a certainty of the near future And every one of the 137 million American citizens knew that lifting the embargo meant something more than an attempt to preserve their neutrality. It implied their conviction that the United States could not afford to see the Allies defeated.



**U.S. SURVIVORS OF A NAZI OUTRAGE**

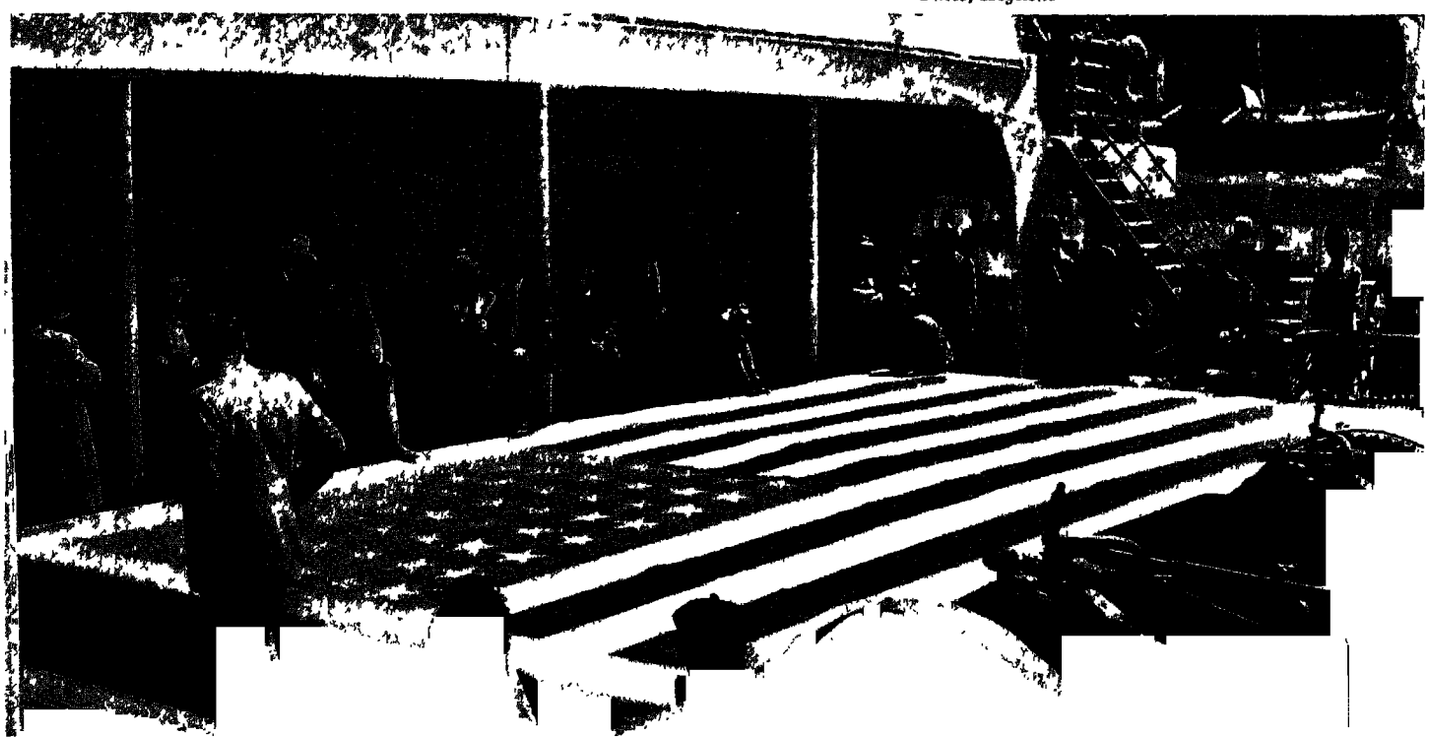
Over 300 Americans were on board the ill-fated "Athenia," sunk by a German U-boat on September 3, 1939. Above, American survivors are seen in Glasgow being addressed by the Consul-General, Mr. Leslie A. Davis (standing), who is introducing to them Mr. John Kennedy (seated at table), the son of the American Ambassador in London.

*Photo, Associated Press*

**AMERICA ADVERTISES HER NATIONALITY**

In order that belligerent aircraft should be in no doubt as to her nationality, the U.S. liner S.S. "Roosevelt," before it sailed for the troubled waters of Europe, had painted on its hatch, as shown below, a large American flag. With the memory of the "Lusitania" still lingering in American minds, the authorities were taking no chances, especially after the recent "Athenia" outrage.

*Photo, Keystone*



## *Historic Documents. VII and VIII*

# *HITLER STANDS DEFIANT BEFORE THE WORLD*

Germany's reply to the British Note calling for the withdrawal of German troops from Poland, and to the Ultimatum which expired at 11 a.m. on September 3, 1939, was handed to our Ambassador later in the same day. Here are extracts from this document.

THE Reich Government and the German nation refuse to accept, or even to satisfy, demands in the form of an ultimatum from the British Government.

For many months there has been a virtual state of war on our Eastern frontier. After the German Government had torn up the Treaty of Versailles all friendly settlements were refused to the Government.

The National Socialist Government has endeavoured repeatedly since the year 1933 to remove the worst forms of coercion and violations of its rights contained in this Treaty.

It was always, in the first instance, the British Government that, by its unbending attitude, prevented any practical revision. . . .

Germany has neither the intention nor has she put forward the demand to annihilate Poland.

The Reich only demanded the revision of those articles of the Treaty of Versailles which far-seeing statesmen of all nations regarded, at the time the dictate was being drafted as intolerable, and therefore impossible in the long run not only for a great nation but also for the whole political and economic interest of Eastern Europe.

### British Blank Cheque to Poland

BRITISH statesmen also described the solution in the East at that time as the germ of wars to come. It was the intention of all German Governments, and of the new National Socialist Government in particular, to remove this danger.

The British Government is to be blamed for having prevented this peaceful revision. By an action, which is unique in history, the British Government gave the Polish State a blank cheque for any action against Germany which that State might intend to carry out.

The British Government promised military help to the Polish Government unreservedly in the event of Germany's defending herself against any provocation or attack. Thereupon the Polish terror assumed intolerable dimensions against the Germans living in territories torn away from Germany. . . .

The German Government, profoundly affected by the suffering of the German population, tortured and inhumanly maltreated by the Poles, watched patiently for five months without even once adopting a similar aggressive attitude towards Poland.

It merely warned Poland that these occurrences would become intolerable if they continued, and that it was determined to take the matter into its own hands if the German population got no help from elsewhere.

### Mussolini's Proposal Rebuffed

THE British Government was fully aware of all these events. It should have been easy for the British Government to make use of its great influence in Warsaw to warn the rulers there to give way to justice and humanity and to observe the existing regulations.

The British Government did not do this. On the contrary, while constantly stressing its pledge to assist Poland under all circumstances, it encouraged the Polish Government to continue its criminal attitude which endangered European peace.

In accordance with this spirit the British Government rebuffed Signor Mussolini's proposal which could still have saved the peace of Europe, though the German Government had declared itself willing to accept it.

The British Government, therefore, bears the responsibility for all the misfortune and suffering which has now come upon many nations and will come in the future. . .

The German Government and the German nation have given innumerable assurances to the British people that they want an understanding and earnest friendship. The British Government has rebuffed up to now all these offers, and has answered them now with an open threat of war. . . . .

# *THE FUEHRER TO THE GERMAN NATION*

That same fateful Sunday three messages from Hitler were broadcast: one to the German nation, reproduced below, another to the German Army on the Western Front, and the third to the Nazi Party.

ENGLAND has for centuries pursued the aim of rendering the peoples of Europe defenceless against the British policy of world conquest by proclaiming a balance of power, in which England claimed the right to attack on threadbare pretexts and destroy that European State which at the moment seemed most dangerous.

Thus at one time she fought the world power of Spain, later the Dutch, then the French, and, since the year 1871, the German.

We ourselves have been witnesses of the policy of encirclement which has been carried on by England against Germany since before the war.

Just as the German nation had begun, under its National Socialist leadership, to recover from the frightful consequences of the dictate of Versailles, and threatened to survive the crisis, British encirclement immediately began once more.

The British war inciters spread the lie before the war, that the battle was only against the House of Hohenzollern or German militarism, that they had no designs on German colonies, that they had no intention of taking the German mercantile fleet.

THEY then oppressed the German people under the Versailles dictate. The faithful fulfilment of this dictate would have sooner or later exterminated 20,000,000 Germans.

I undertook to mobilize the resistance of the German nation against this and to assure work and bread for them. I have many times offered England and the English people the understanding and friendship of the German people. I have always been repelled.

I had for years been aware that the aim of these war inciters had for long been to take Germany by surprise at a favourable opportunity.

I am more fully determined than ever to beat back this attack. Germany shall not again capitulate. There is no sense in sacrificing one life after another and submitting to an even worse Versailles dictate.

We have never been a nation of slaves, and will not be one in the future.

### Great Sacrifices Demanded From All

WHATEVER Germans in the past had to sacrifice for the existence of our realm they shall not be greater than those which we are today prepared to make.

This resolve is an inexorable one. It necessitates the most thorough measures and imposes on us one law above all others:

If the soldier is fighting at the front no one shall profit by the war. If the soldier falls at the front no one at home shall evade his duty.

As long as the German people was united it has never been conquered. It was the lack of unity in 1918 that led to collapse.

Whoever offends against this unity need expect nothing else than annihilation as an enemy of the nation.

If our people fulfils its highest duty in this sense then God will help us, Who has always bestowed His mercy on him who was determined to help himself.

## *Historic Documents. IX-XII*

# *STIRRING MESSAGES TO THREE GREAT NATIONS*

From the many grave statements made and the inspiring messages broadcast on September 3, the day that Britain and France declared war on Hitlerism, we select four more; H.M. the King, speaking from Buckingham Palace; the Prime Minister in a message broadcast to the German people in their own language; M. Daladier in a broadcast to the French nation; and M. Lebrun's message to the French Senate.

### His Majesty The King

In this grave hour, perhaps the most fateful in our history, I send to every household of my peoples, both at home and overseas, this message, spoken with the same depth of feeling for each one of you as if I were able to cross your threshold and speak to you myself.

For the second time in the lives of most of us we are at war. Over and over again we have tried to find a peaceful way out of the differences between ourselves and those who are now our enemies. But it has been in vain.

We have been forced into a conflict. For we are called, with our Allies, to meet the challenge of a principle which, if it were to prevail, would be fatal to any civilized order in the world.

It is the principle which permits a State, in the selfish pursuit of power, to disregard its treaties and its solemn pledges; which sanctions the use of force, or threat of force, against the sovereignty and independence of other States.

Such a principle, stripped of all disguise, is surely the mere primitive doctrine that might is right; and if this principle were established throughout the world, the freedom of our own country and of the whole British Commonwealth of Nations would be in danger.

But far more than this—the peoples of the world would be kept in the bondage of fear, and all hopes of settled peace and of the security of justice and liberty among nations would be ended.

This is the ultimate issue which confronts us. For the sake of all that we ourselves hold dear, and of the world's order and peace, it is unthinkable that we should refuse to meet the challenge.

It is to this high purpose that I now call my people at home and my peoples across the Seas, who will make our cause their own.

I ask them to stand calm, firm and united in this time of trial. The task will be hard. There may be dark days ahead, and war can no longer be confined to the battlefield. But we can only do the right as we see the right, and reverently commit our cause to God.

If one and all we keep resolutely faithful to it, ready for whatever service or sacrifice it may demand, then, with God's help, we shall prevail.

May He bless and keep us all.

### Mr. Chamberlain's Broadcast

GERMAN people!

Your country and mine are now at war. Your Government has bombed and invaded the free and independent State of Poland, which this country is in honour bound to defend. . . .

You are told by your Government that you are fighting because Poland rejected your Leader's offer and resorted to force. What are the facts? The so-called "offer" was made to the Polish Ambassador in Berlin on Thursday evening, two hours before the announcement by your Government that it had been "rejected." So far from having been rejected, there had been no time even to consider it.

You may ask why Great Britain is concerned. We are concerned because we gave our word of honour to defend Poland against aggression. Why did we feel it necessary to pledge ourselves to defend this Eastern Power when our interests lie in the West, and when your Leader has said he has no interest to the West? The answer is that—and I regret to have to say it—that nobody in this country any longer places any trust in your Leader's word.

He gave his word that he would respect the Locarno Treaty; he broke it. He gave his word that he neither wished nor intended to annex Austria; he broke it. He declared that he would not incorporate the Czechs in the Reich; he did so. He gave his word after Munich that he had no further territorial demands in Europe; he broke it. He gave his word that he wanted no Polish provinces; he broke it. He has sworn to you for years that he was the mortal enemy of Bolshevism; he is now its ally.

Can you wonder his word is, for us, not worth the paper it is written on?

The German-Soviet Pact was a cynical *volte-face*, designed to shatter the Peace Front against aggression. This gamble failed. The Peace Front stands firm. Your Leader is now sacrificing you, the German people, to the still more monstrous gamble of a war to extricate himself from the impossible position into which he has led himself and you.

In this war we are not fighting against you, the German people, for whom we have no bitter feeling, but against a tyrannous and forsworn regime which has betrayed not only its own people but the whole of Western civilization and all that you and we hold dear.

May God defend the right!

### M. Daladier to the French Nation

FRENCHWOMEN and Frenchmen, since September 1, at the dawn of day, Poland has been the victim of the most brutal and cynical of aggressions. Her army is heroically resisting the invader.

The responsibility for the blood shed rests wholly on the Hitlerite Government. The fate of peace was in the hands of Hitler. He has willed war.

France and Great Britain have multiplied their efforts to save peace. Even this morning they made an urgent *démarche* in Berlin, addressing a last appeal to reason to the German Government, and asking that a halt should be called to hostilities and peaceful negotiations opened. Germany met us with a refusal.

She had already refused an answer to all the men whose voices have been raised in these last few days in favour of world peace.

She thus wishes for the destruction of Poland, so as to be able later to ensure the domination of the whole of Europe and the enslavement of France.

By standing up against the most horrible of all tyrannies and by making good our word, we are fighting to defend our land, our homes and our liberty.

I have worked without respite against war up to the last minute, and my conscience is clear.

I salute with emotion and affection our young soldiers who are now going to accomplish the sacred duty which we have ourselves carried out. They can have confidence in their leaders, worthy of those who have already led France to victory.

The cause of France is linked with that of justice. It is that of all peaceful and free nations. It will be victorious. . . .

### President of France to the Senate

YOU have met at a critical moment of our national life. War has broken out in Central Europe, men are killing each other, innocent victims fall machine-gunned from the air.

Two peoples had differences to settle. They could have done that by free and loyal negotiations, as they were advised to do from all sides. At the moment when their plenipotentiaries were about to meet, Germany brutally attacked Poland, thus creating a state of war which nothing could justify.

Britain and France, resolutely attached to a policy of prudence, wisdom and moderation, have done everything humanly possible to avert this crisis.

For some days past our young men have been mounting guard on the frontiers, and today general mobilization summons all our forces to the defence of the country.

As spokesman of the nation I address to our forces on land and sea and in the air an affectionate greeting, and the expression of the unanimous confidence of the country . . .

Chapter 7

# THE HOME FRONT: CIVIL DEFENCE AGAINST THE NEW WARFARE

*Totalitarian Defence—Britain's Wonderful Response—Reserved Occupations—National Registration—The Civilian Army—The Militia and Its Naval Counterpart—Recruiting the Air Forces—Birth of Civil Defence—Training A.R.P. Workers—Magnificent Work of Women's Voluntary Services—The Volunteer Police Reserves—Unpaid and Unpraised Workers*

TOTALITARIAN war waged by a totalitarian state requires totalitarian defence; it is aimed at the civilian, the home, and the family, and these must be ready to defend themselves to the utmost if defeat is to be prevented. In that spirit, and for that reason, the man in the street and his wife and children in Great Britain took up the arms of defence against Nazism; they became soldiers—under discipline and in uniform—and accepted their fate philosophically.

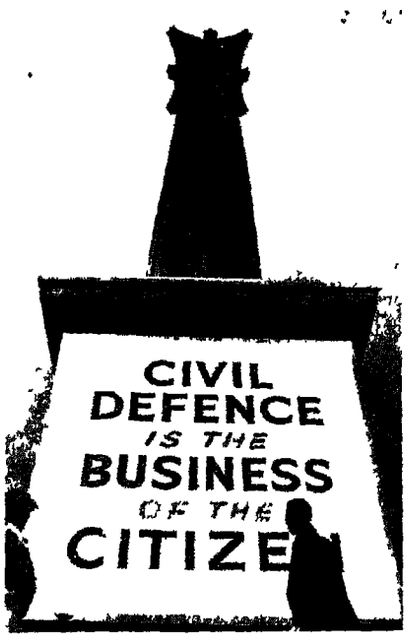
**Fear of Totalitarianism**

It would be far from the truth to say that Britain's civilian population "rushed" to join the innumerable organizations which had to be formed to defend their homes against possible invasion from the air. Few of them were actually desirous of putting off the black coat and white collar, or the corduroy trousers and scarf, of their daily working life in order to don the khaki or navy blue, the steel helmet, the service respirator, the decontamination suit, of the voluntary or paid services on the home front. "Mädchen in Uniform" was to them a German ideal, not a British one; regimentation of the population was a Nazi method, not a democratic one; and they feared, perhaps with some justice, that in adopting a totalitarian defence against a totalitarian war Britain might take an irrevocable step towards the abyss of a totalitarian state. They had laughed too often at uniformed Germany, with its brown and black shirts, its Labour Corps, its women's Home Army, its marching, drilling, booted bands of all kinds, to wish to imitate it in Britain.

Apart from these considerations there were three stages in the history of Britain's attitude towards Civil Defence. First, the apathetic: people could not believe that war would ever come, or, if they did realize it, preferred to transfer the burden of defending themselves to others.

Second, the contemptuous: this strange attitude appeared after the introduction of conscription with the Militia Act; those who took up Civil Defence work about this time were despised as seeking "soft" jobs to avoid being called up, when the time came, for active service. Jews were particular victims of this unjust and stupid idea, but thousands of others suffered from the same misconstruction of their motives.

Third, the enthusiastic: this, the last, most successful yet most dangerous period, began only a month or two before war broke out. It had by then dawned on most people that the war of nerves could culminate only in a war of arms. Acts of Parliament had made it compulsory upon employers to provide some form of shelter and some trained personnel for the protection of their staffs; and the enthusiasm of the comparatively few who had by now completed their training had spread to the leisured remainder. Propaganda was by now going full blast; vast exhortatory posters appeared in Trafalgar Square and Piccadilly Circus; the constant repetition of the catch phrase "We've got to be prepared," seen wherever one went—on posters, handbills, hoardings, motor-car windows—at last bore fruit.




**ENGLAND STILL EXPECTS ...**
**What could be a more fitting place for this poster than the Nelson Column which stands in Trafalgar Square as a perpetual reminder of a man who placed Duty to his country above every other consideration?**
*Photo, Keystone*

The danger in this period of enthusiasm was that folk of all ages and all states of health and mind flocked to join services to which many were not suited, light-heartedly undertook pledges which they would never be able to carry out, and almost overwhelmed the skeleton organization which had been prepared to receive them. It says much for a multitude of local officials that the organization did not entirely break down; hosts of unrecognized Town Clerks bore a national burden in these few short pre-war months.

The result was that by that fateful September 3 Britain had "muddled through" with an extraordinary measure of success. At 11.15 a.m. on that day the Home Front became perhaps the most important factor in the maintenance of war.

**Twelve Months' Miracle**

Compared with the state of its Civil Defence twelve months previously, Britain had accomplished a miracle. In September, 1938, when the Munich meeting stopped war, the Home Front was represented by a few trenches in public places, an assortment of ill-equipped and often out-of-date anti-aircraft guns, and an alarming lack of trained personnel. And this remarkable paucity of preparations was accomplished with a maximum of undirected or diffused effort. "Look on this picture, and on this." In September, 1939 the whole organization of Civil Defence came into force with comparative absence of strain; it "took over" with the smoothness of a well-oiled and well-tended machine. Suddenly—almost before the non-service civilian could realize it—everyone was on duty; the cities were transformed, the country was one vast camp.

How was it done? In August, 1914 the whole Civil Defence of Britain consisted of Martello towers built to repel Napoleon, a little b
and a few trenches in our



HOME FRONT MINISTER

After being Lord Privy Seal, with special powers to deal with all A.R.P. matters, Sir John Anderson (above) became Minister of Home Security in the first wartime Cabinet. Famous as a determined and efficient organizer, he was then fifty-seven.
*Photo, Vandyk*

resorts, and a number of special constables on bicycles. Add to these the Land Army, the "Waacs" (Women's Army Auxiliary Corps) and "Wrens" (Women's Royal Naval Service), and that was about the sum total of civilian effort. In September, 1938 the term "National Service" was heard for the first time, but the call brought little response, and even Government activity was, as mentioned above, limited and undirected. Our unpreparedness in those days of 1938 was more than distressing; after three years of "rearmament" and seven years of National government Britain was "wide open" to attack and barely able to offer any offence in return.

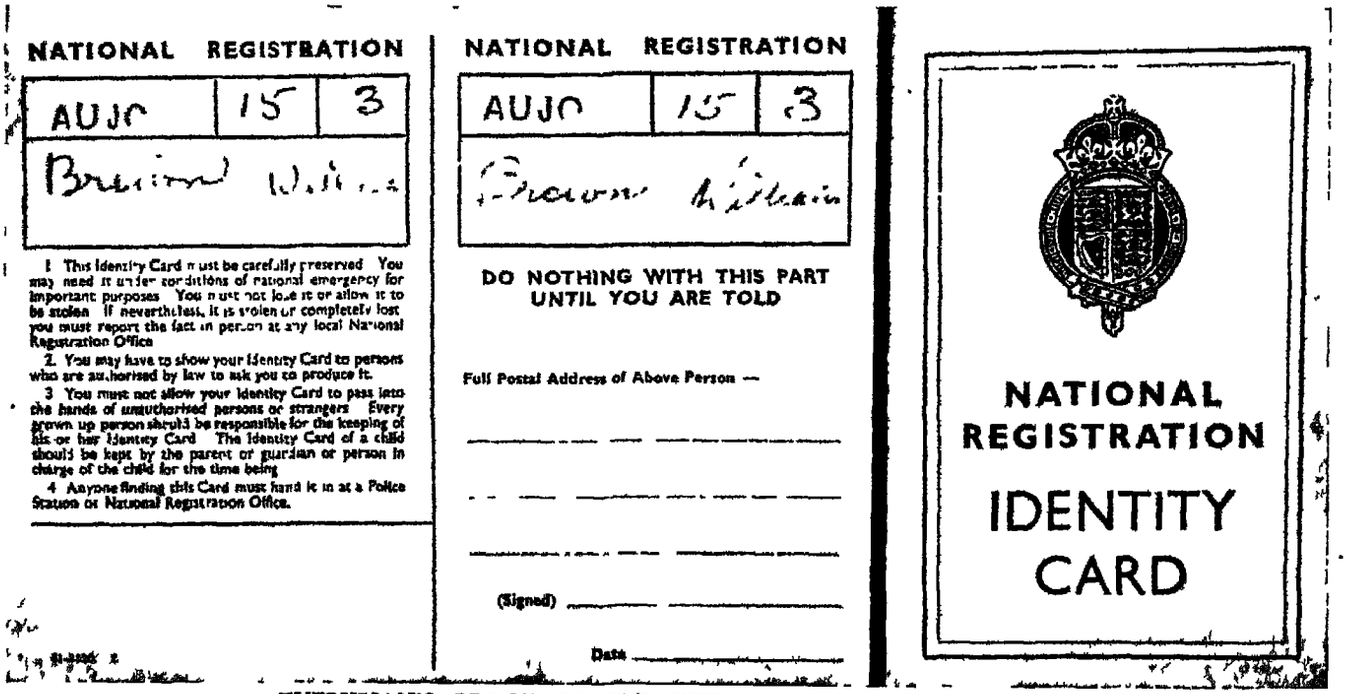
Twelve months passed, and those twelve months witnessed, in effect, the whole history of the Home Front as it appeared in September, 1939. The first three months of that year of effort were occupied in laying the plans. Then, on January 23, 1939, the campaign for National Service was launched in real earnest by the Prime Minister The following day there was a great Rally at the Albert Hall, and on January 25 the first copies of the National Service Handbook—a conspectus of all the forms of service then open to the public—were distributed. Local Committees were formed to direct operations in their own neighbourhood, and the Ministry of Labour had already added the words "and National Service" to its title.

It was in January, too, that there was issued the first Schedule of Reserved Occupations—subsequently many times revised. This was planned to avoid errors in recruitment. Certain workers, whose labours would always be essential in industry, were forbidden to offer themselves for any form of National Service; others were allowed to enlist in A.R.P. and kindred organizations only. The first Schedule was, as it turned out, an absurdity; almost the whole nation seemed to be "reserved" for essential work. But the idea was sound, and later revisions of the Schedule served a most valuable purpose—to avoid the mistakes of the last war, when patriotic miners and other key workers on the home front had to be taken back to their trades from the fighting line.

**Home Front Red-letter Days**

Another notable date in the pre-war history of National Service was the great march-past of 20,000 volunteers before the King and Queen in Hyde Park. This took place on July 2, 1939. With the storm-clouds gathering even then, this was a stirring and a heartening sight.

In the meantime there had been a general and widespread demand for a National Register, on which conscription and other necessary acts of Government could be based. After much delay the idea was accepted, and a compulsory census for general war purposes was taken on September 29. It was hoped that it would be found invaluable in filling the gaps in service and in issuing rationed foods to the people. But the fact that Britons




EVERYMAN'S PROOF OF IDENTITY

*L.N.A.*

On the night of Friday, September 29, 1939, the nation was registered, and during the following few days every man, woman and child in the country received an identity card like that above. The letters on the left at top are those of the district group; the number (15) following is that allotted to the household, and the next number (3) is that of the individual in the household, "William Brown."



**TRAINED MEN AND EAGER 'ROOKIES'**

Regular Army, Territorials and Militia are now a single entity—the British Army. On the right is a Territorial unit well known to Londoners, the Queen's Westminsters, seen passing the Houses of Parliament on August 6, 1939, after their annual training Below, smiling members of the second batch of Militiamen to be called up are reporting for duty.

*Photos, Fox Photos, Central Press*



knew that they were fighting on the side of freedom, despite these enforced Government measures, was clearly demonstrated by Mr. Hore-Belisha's statement that volunteers for the Army in the first month of war outnumbered the conscript Militiamen by two to one. Compulsion had come, but few waited to be compelled to serve their country in her time of need.

The Army is dealt with in detail in another chapter, but a few words must be said here concerning its Territorial and Militia arms. Long before Hitler came on the scene—in fact, immediately after the First Great War—the Territorial Army was founded on the basis of the old Territorial Force, and its first members (the nucleus of the great volunteer army of 1939) were the real torchbearers of the spirit of National Service. The value placed by the War Office on these "citizen soldiers" was shown years afterwards (actually in 1935) when virtually all the anti-aircraft and coastal defence—guns, searchlights, and so on—was placed in the hands of the T.A. By 1937 the original one A.A. Division had become two; in June, 1938 this had become five (forming a Corps), and finally, in March, 1939, the five Divisions became an A.A. Command of seven Divisions.

This month was an historic one in the annals of the T.A., for it was then that the War Minister launched the greatest peace-time recruiting drive ever known. His slogan was "Double Up and Double the Territorial Army"—and right well did the young men of Britain take his advice. This



**WOMAN VOLUNTEERS FOR AIR PATROL**

**One of the earliest organizations to be founded as part of the Home Front was the Civil Air Guard, open to civilian pilots, men and women, who received instruction at flying clubs all over the country at reduced rates Here is an instructor with a fair member of this corps**

*Fox Photos*

"doubling" applied only to the so called Field Force, but the A A units were brought up to establishment at the same time In nine weeks the Field Force, now almost entirely mechanized, had reached 87 per cent of its new (doubled) establishment—a truly remarkable achievement Equipment and uniform were at the same time thoroughly modernized and their issue expedited In actual fact, 36,000 joined the T A in a month, many older men, veterans of the last war, flocked to the National Defence Companies (now merged in Home Defence Battalions) Another innovation was the installation of light A A units in industrial establishments

In the summer of 1939 the whole of this huge force, approximating the 440,000 aimed at, went into camp—most of the men for a fortnight, but the A A men (under a new Act) for a month's intensive training

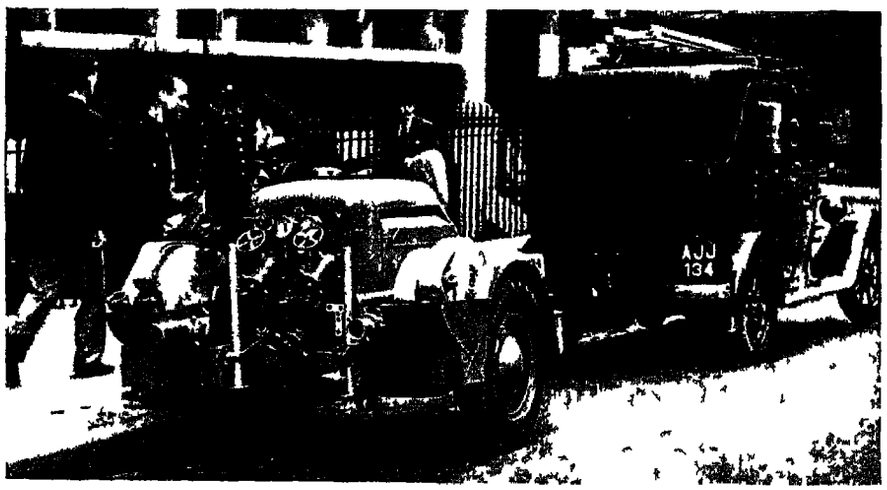
These are the bare facts and figures, but they hardly do justice to the amazing spirit of patriotism and sacrifice shown by the young men of the country in their response to the War Minister's appeal Doubling the army in a few months was a task that called for the most skilled powers of organization, much-maligned Whitehall deserved, if it did not receive, great praise for its handling of the vast body of men who answered the call

But it seemed that even this wonderful voluntary effort was not enough and in May the word 'conscription" was heard for the first time on official lips Like the National Register, it had been urged by Conservative backbenchers for many months, but the Government had always refused to introduce a measure that savoured so evilly of the Continental system However under the pressure of threatened totalitarian war, totalitarian methods had to be adopted, and an old English military word came back into the language in May, 1939 when the first 20 year old Militiamen under the Military Training Act became liable for service The spirit of these conscripts was as keen as that of the volunteers, and nothing but praise was heard on all sides for their work The first batch were called up in July, and a second (later known as the Army Class) after the outbreak of war, in September They were to be reinforced by the 21 age group, the first to be called up under the National Service (Armed Forces) Act, a wartime measure

The Militia had its naval counterpart in the Royal Naval Special Reserve But the Silent Service is also proud of its own highly trained volunteers in the R N V R (Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve) and its younger brother the R N V Special Reserve Medical tests for these services are probably the most severe of all, and the waiting list has long been enormous The R N V R also developed an Air Section, and there was a R N V (Wireless) Reserve, both highly popular services

**Senior Service Reserves**

A recruiting office estimate at the time was that at least one in three of the young men who volunteered wanted to join the Air Force—and what could




**READY FOR THE AIR INCENDIARIES**

**Quite suddenly in the first few days of the war, 3,000 auxiliary fire engines—composed of taxis with trailer pumps—appeared on the London streets These, and also regular fire engines, were partly manned by members of the Auxiliary Fire Service, three of whom are here seen " standing by "**

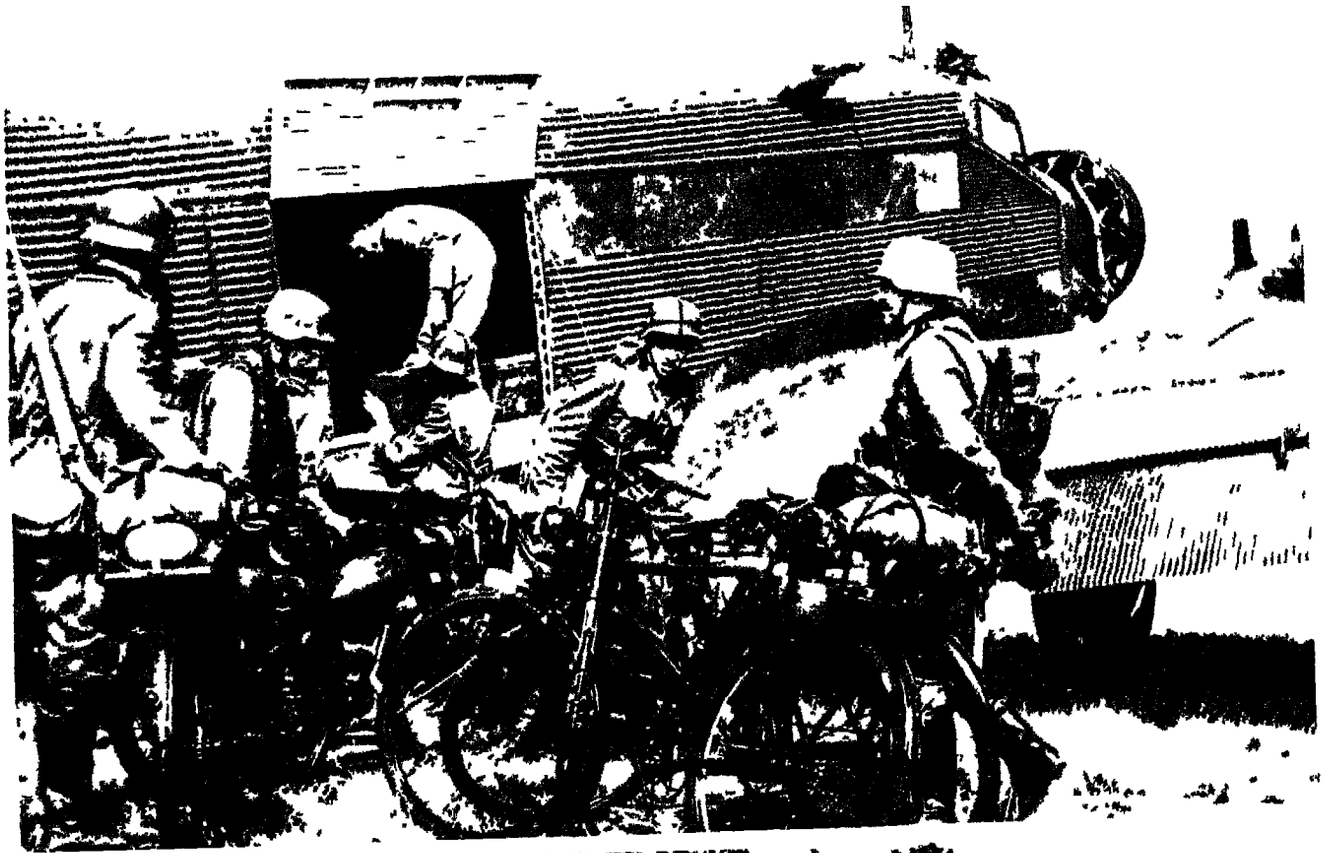
*Photo, L N A*

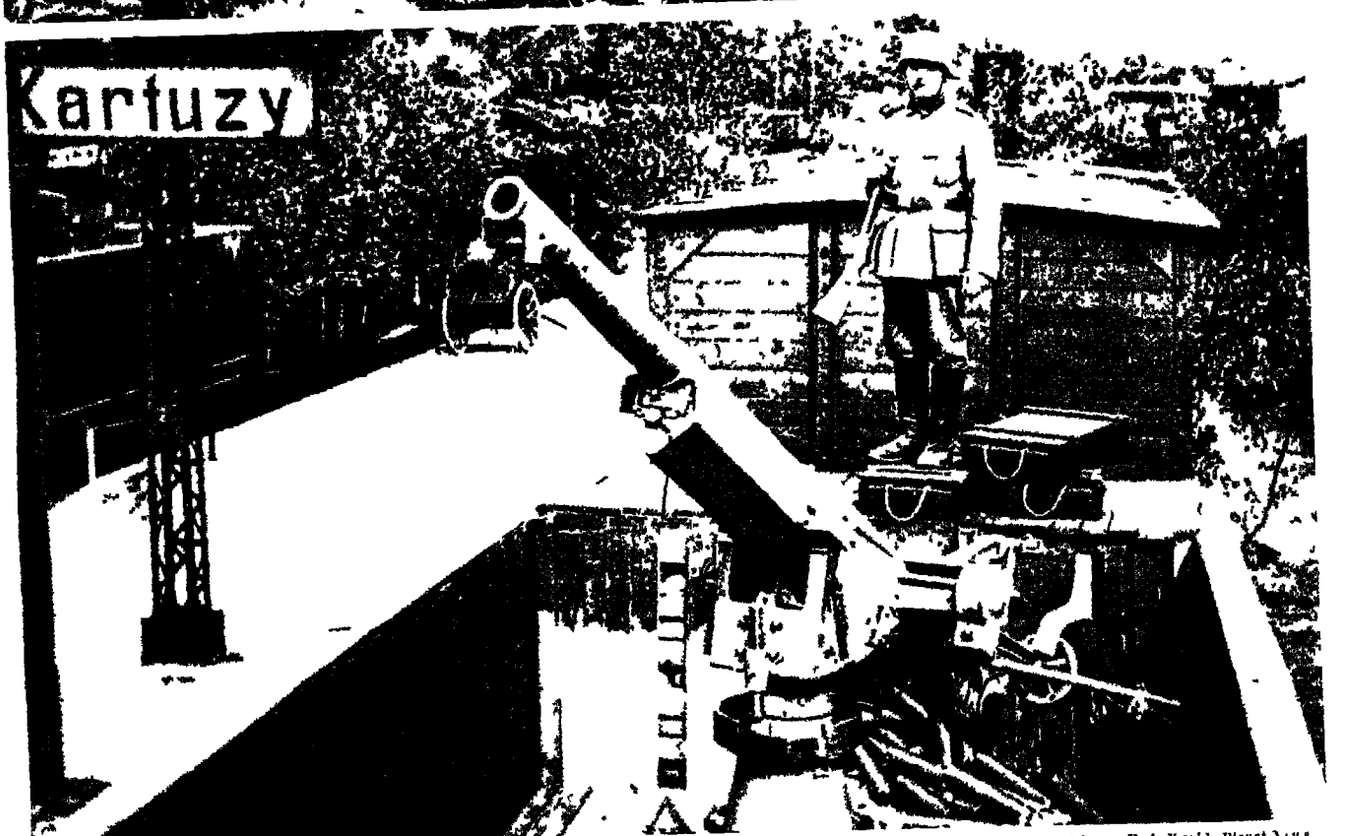


*International Graphic Press*

**AS 'SUPREME COMMANDER' ON THE EASTERN FRONT**

Soon after Germany had invaded Poland, Hitler proceeded to the theatre of war to superintend operations As Sir Nevile Henderson acutely remarked in his "Final Report," issued as a White Paper, the "corporal of the last war was anxious to prove what he could do as a conquering generalissimo in the next" Above he is seen at a captured Polish air base studying a map with General von Reichenau (*right*) who commanded the 8th Army Group






*Photos Wide World Planet News*

**TWO REASONS FOR GERMAN SUCCESS IN POLAND**

Here are two phases of the war on the Polish front Above, the German use of their aeroplanes for transport bicycles and ammunition are being unloaded from a 'plane by German soldiers Below is a German anti-aircraft gun mounted in a railway wagon at Kartuzy (Karthaus), in the former Polish Corridor, shortly after its capture by German troops Mechanization by air and ground contributed more than any other means to the speed of the German advance





BEFORE THE 'STAB IN THE BACK'

Until the collapse of Poland was made inevitable by the blow in the rear from the Soviet armies, it seemed that her forces would be able to make a stand along the line of the rivers east of Warsaw Top, Polish troops going into advanced trenches outside Warsaw , below, Polish infantry relaxing after gas drill while waiting to go into action

*Photos Planet News*



**BREST-LITOVSK REVISITED — OR THE TABLES TURNED**

*Photo, Central News*

**A Soviet representative is here seen arriving by armoured car at Brest-Litovsk to discuss with Nazi army leaders the division of Polish territory. It will be remembered that it was at Brest-Litovsk, in February, 1918, that Russia signed a peace treaty with the Central Powers which, territorially, put back the frontier of Russia to where it had stood in the 17th century and almost shut out the U.S.S.R. from the sea.**

be more natural in an air-minded age, in a country whose aerial tradition bids fair to rival the age-old call of the sea. The Auxiliary Air Force, arranged like the regular force on a squadron basis, and like the T.A. on a Territorial basis, had long been famous for its efficiency; and its squadrons raised for the balloon barrage since early in 1938 carried on the tradition.

The R.A.F.V.R. (Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve) dated from 1936. Since the virtual closing of the A.A.F. (Auxiliary Air Force) flying squadrons to new volunteers it had borne the burden of the many thousands of aspiring "part-time" pilots, observers, gunners, airmen, and all the rest who wanted to get into the air or at least to help the R.A.F. on the ground. After the war began, the only "duration" enlistments allowed were in the R.A.F.V.R. (There was, of course, no T.A., no R.N.V.R., and no R.A.F.V.R. in the peacetime sense; all were merged into the regular Services as full-time fighting men.)

Another outlet for the airminded was the Civil Air Guard. This provided cheap flying instruction at the clubs for men and women who guaranteed in return to offer their services in time of emergency. It was formed in July, 1938. Also under the Air Ministry was the Observer Corps, whose important task it was to be the front-line "ears" of Britain's air defence. They were civilians who normally served in their own neighbourhood, under conditions like those of special constables.

A service which should not be forgotten is the Air Defence Cadet Corps, for boys of 14 to 18. This was founded by the Air League, but the Air Cadets proved so useful that many squadrons were taken over by the R.A.F.

Thus, when war did come on September 3, 1939, the great influx of volunteers (as well as regulars) meant that the ranks were filled almost to overflowing. Enlistment for the Navy, Army, and Air Force had even to be strictly limited, and for some time few recruits could be taken in certain categories of service. What a contrast to those dark days of 1914, when appeal after appeal had to be made for every available man to fill the great gaps in the fighting services!

**No Recruits Wanted!**

Let us now turn to Civil Defence proper—the A.R.P. services, which were the chief means of putting such vast numbers of citizens on a "war footing" and which brought home to the man in the street the fact that this war would be a "home" war against English *men* as well as against England.



**WOMEN'S 'AGENT-GENERAL'**

**Women's Voluntary Services, of which Lady Reading (above) was the chairman, was a gigantic "agency" for placing the energies of Britain's womanhood to their best advantage, and its work was of the greatest value.**

*Sport and General*

A.R.P. had first seen the light of day as long before as May, 1935, when an A.R.P. department was formed at the Home Office. Little definite was done for years after that, and the A.R.P. Act which became law on January 1, 1938, aroused little popular enthusiasm or even notice. Nevertheless, it was a far-reaching measure: it gave powers jointly to the Home Office and Local Government authorities to enforce the institution of a full system of A.R.P., including properly trained fire-fighting services. But it was only the September crisis of 1938 that brought home the urgency of the matter—what with the first fitting of gas-masks by the first voluntary wardens and helpers, the digging of trenches, the piling of sandbags, and the furnishing of gas "refuge rooms."

Thereafter voluntary recruitment to the A.R.P. services increased by leaps and bounds, and soon almost every family had some member who was a part-time worker or trainee in Civil Defence organizations. No words can too highly praise the sacrifices made by thousands of already fully occupied men and women, who voluntarily gave up precious time to training for all kinds of war work. Respectable business men endured agonies as they puffed round improvised parade-grounds, in full war kit, to test their fitness for a wardenship; their wives, emerging from travelling "gas-vans," coughed, wept and spluttered their determination to do *their* bit in the suburb or village; their sons took up the truncheon of the Special Constabulary, or War Reserve Police; their daughters donned the overalls of the C.A.G. (Civil Air Guard), swotted the details of the internal combustion engine, and grew grubbier day by day with oil and carbon. Others drilled, climbed ladders and

**Men-in-the-Street in Uniform**



**WOMEN IN UNIFORM**

**At the Great Hyde Park parade of the voluntary services on July 2, 1939, all the women's organizations were represented. Above, for example, are seen (left to right) members of the A.T.S., W.R.N.S., W.A.A.F., the Ambulance Corps, and the Women's Land Army, photographed together at that parade.**

*Associated Press*



WHILE THE MEN ARE AWAY . . . .

Today, with the development of mechanization and the resources of science, and better organization than in 1914, agriculture is in a position to increase very considerably the country's supplies of home-grown food, and the Women's Land Army is making good any deficiency in the numbers of agricultural workers. Here, women tractor drivers are seen ploughing at the East Sussex Agricultural College, Plumpton, where they receive training.

*Sport and General*

handled hoses, clad in the A.F.S. (Auxiliary Fire Service) boiler suit; still more became First Aid experts after attending courses of lectures at the office or factory.

Sir Samuel Hoare, who was at the time Home Secretary—but later replaced Sir John Anderson, Britain's first Minister of Civil Defence, as Lord Privy Seal—made a nation-wide appeal for 1,000,000 A.R.P. volunteers in March, 1938. By December the figure had already been surpassed! Nevertheless, the call for men and women for "passive defence" went on—and continued after war had been declared. An organization practically non-existent up to 1938 had by September of that year nearly a million and a half volunteers in the various branches of A.R.P., ready day and night to "do their bit."

Firemen, wardens, ambulance workers, decontamination, rescue and demolition squads, first-aid parties, clerks, messengers, motor-drivers, and a host of other categories were called for, and the call was answered. A complete "army," with branches if anything more multifarious than those of a fighting army, grew gradually into shape in these few short months. Training was difficult—instructors were lacking in some branches for a considerable time—but was somehow achieved; the spirit of "help one another" was seen in this connexion to be as strong in Britain as it had ever been. Money was, of course, poured out "like water" on the organization, but, taken by and large, it was well spent. Complaints of waste and of profiteering at the State's expense were ventilated and action was, in most cases, quickly taken. The decision to pay an approximate all-round wage of £3 per week to the majority of full-time A.R.P. workers led to many abuses, but justified itself in most districts. Such abuses as were discovered early in the war—the taking up of paid A.R.P. service by four or five members of one family, which thus had the quite unnecessarily large income of £12 or £15 per week, is one example—were put right by action of local authorities; and ratepayers' associations were quick to point out other wasteful expenditure.

**Criticisms of A.R.P.**

The Civil Defence Service was, of course, organized in the expectation of daily air raids from the moment war began. Had that expectation been justified by events, no complaint would have been raised on the grounds of expense. As it turned out, however, no air raid at all was experienced in the first period of the war; the vast organization provided was thus "unemployed," and the sight of hosts of mobilized wardens, fire-fighters, first-aid parties, etc., standing idle naturally aroused the wrath of rate- and taxpayers. Reorganization was at once taken in hand, and a "weeding-out" process began in October which bade fair to reduce to a minimum the expense of the mobilization of Home Front fighters.

Let us turn now to the magnificent efforts of women volunteers. With the foundation under Lady Reading in June, 1938 of the Women's Voluntary Services organization, a "voluntary employment exchange" unparalleled anywhere, the energies of a host of womenfolk were directed to A.R.P. work and other forms of service such as the A.T.S. (Auxiliary Territorial Service), W.R.N.S., W.A.A.F. (Women's Auxiliary Air Force), Women's Land Army, Civil Nursing Reserve, British Red Cross, Order of St. John, etc. Some organizations were soon "full up."

The Auxiliary Territorial Service, formed in September, 1938, existed to perform a variety of non-combatant duties by the side of its Army brothers. It had officers, N.C.O.s and "other ranks" in much the same way










*Photos, Central Press; L.N.A.; Fox*

## LONDON'S A.R.P. IN REALISTIC REHEARSAL

London, as a vital centre, endeavoured by means of frequent rehearsals to maintain at a high pitch of efficiency the various branches of civil defence. Our photographs show: (top, left) Admiral Sir Edward Evans, one of London's Regional A.R.P. Commissioners, bending over a "casualty" during an air-raid rehearsal at Islington; (top, right) entrance to a public air-raid shelter in Fleet Street; (above, left) an A.R.P. warden reporting after A.R.P. exercises in Piccadilly; (above, right) a decontamination squad at work in a Chelsea street.



**WILLING HANDS FOR CASUALTIES**

Above is seen a Casualty Evacuation Train during an air-raid rehearsal. Stretcher-bearers of the St. John Ambulance Brigade are lifting a "casualty" into the train prior to its departure for a place of safety. On the train a staff of nurses is in readiness to deal with the injured. Many such trains were in readiness as soon as war broke out.

*Fox Photos*

as the Army, and included in its 20,000 "soldiers" the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry—the famous F.A.N.Y.s—and the Women's Legion. The Women's Royal Naval Service was re-born in March, 1939, and its members (the "Wrens") took up duty at our naval ports. The Women's Auxiliary Air Force, another important service, was formed four months later. Many members of the Women's Legion (Mechanized Transport) were drafted to the W.A.A.F.

The girls of the Land Army, soon 25,000 strong, helped the farmers in their vital task of garnering and preserving Britain's food supply. The Nursing Auxiliaries and other members of the Civil Nursing Reserve, whose members were three times as numerous as the Land Army, came into action in the hospitals at the outbreak of war. Many women, too, placed their names on the various registers of "specialists"—engineers, doctors, and so on—or on the valuable "life donor" or blood-transfusion service.

The men—and the women, who were mostly clerks and telephonists—in the Auxiliary Fire Service became a presence with whom familiarity bred the opposite of contempt. By the side of the experienced "regular" firemen they displayed in emergency every sort of quality needed in such an important part of National Service. In London alone there were already 36,000 of them in July, 1939, and 200,000 throughout the length and breadth of the country. The Service had been founded in February, 1937.

The volunteer Police reserves, about 250,000 strong, were divided into the Special Constabulary (the so-called "Second Reserve") and the War Reserve (the "Third Reserve"). Many men in both services became full-time police, with full police uniforms.

The wardens, ambulance drivers and similar A.R.P. workers were in every case under the control of the local authority, and organization varied within wide limits. Some were paid full-time personnel, but the great majority gave up part of their leisure quite voluntarily and without recompense to long periods on duty at their posts, or on patrol, at training exercises, lectures, enforcing the lighting black-out, and so on.

While the workers willingly gave themselves to defend their homes and families, it was also made impossible for employers to shirk their responsibilities. Under the Civil Defence Act (July, 1939) every employer of more than 50 persons was forced to provide A.R.P. training and proper shelter for his staff. Many had anticipated this demand and had already perfected their schemes before that date, but the majority had left this provision to the last minute (the end of September, under the Act), and by no means all business houses and factories were supplied with shelter and trained personnel when war broke out. Employers, in general, lagged behind their employees in realization of the urgency of Civil Defence: but war forced action upon them, and within about six weeks most had complied with the regulations.

A word should be said here in tribute to the hundreds of employees who voluntarily remained on night duty (as enforced by the Home Office) for fire-fighting, gas-decontamination, and first-aid, at their employers' premises. Unpaid and sometimes unpraised, they kept watch by night over the property of employers who often had made little or no provision for their workers' safety by day. Dim figures moving about the deserted blocks of London's offices during the long hours of the night, they deserved more than the free meal or two which they received; most of all, they deserved public recognition.

Such was Britain's Home Front in September, 1939. This brief survey has only lightly sketched the vast picture of a country at war; the problem of evacuation, and the part which voluntary workers played in it, is dealt with in another chapter. But it gives some indication of the astonishingly strong spirit of sacrifice and willingness manifested. German propagandists were never tired of proclaiming that the "degenerate" democracies were so effete as to be incapable of fighting in their own defence against militant National Socialism. They overlooked the British character, which refuses compulsion but voluntarily accepts with good heart burdens that other, compulsion-ridden countries, would shirk if they could. For that reason unity, which is imposed on Germany, grows naturally in the free soil of democracy; and for that reason it will endure to the end and withstand all attacks more firmly. The Nazi may point proudly to the empty façade of an enslaved nation with one race, one realm and one leader; Britons rely on the firm foundation laid by a public spirit which, though it prides itself on having a mind of its own, is built up into a solid edifice by any call to sacrifice in the name of the freedom dearer than life itself.

**The British Volunteer**

# *Historic Documents. XIII-XV*

## *HITLERISM--'IL FAUT EN FINIR'*

Time and again it was emphasized by British spokesmen that it was not the German people we were fighting, but Hitlerism. Below are given three striking utterances on this distinction: first, extracts from a broadcast on September 11 by Mr. Anthony Eden, Dominions Secretary; second, a statement issued, also on September 11, by the Ministry of Information in reply to a speech by Field-Marshal Goering; and third a passage from Mr. Chamberlain's address in the House of Commons on September 13

### Rt. Hon. Anthony Eden

A WEEK has passed since this country found itself at war with Nazi rule in Germany, and today we are a united people, more closely knit one to another in our common resolve than at any time in our history. More united, if that were possible, and certainly no less determined than when, some twenty-five years ago, we pledged ourselves to fight in a good cause. For such a cause we are fighting with one heart and mind today. How has this come about?

First, we have a good conscience. The White Paper which the Government recently made public and which disclosed the story of the ten days that preceded the outbreak of war has made it clear beyond a doubt that the Government not only strove to keep the peace but took great risks for peace. . . .

Every inducement was offered Herr Hitler to enter the way of peaceful negotiation. The Polish Government had accepted this principle of negotiation. Herr Hitler deliberately and with set purpose made negotiation impossible. Instead he chose to embark upon a war of naked aggression. . . .

The German Chancellor carried cynical dissimulation so far as finally to invade Poland because Poland had failed to accept peace proposals which she had never even received from the German Government. There has never been a more flagrant mockery of international good faith.

Poland was ready to negotiate, as Czechoslovakia was ready to negotiate a year ago. Herr Hitler has preferred force. He has made the choice; he must suffer the decision. For us now there will be no turning back. We have no quarrel with the German people, but there can be no lasting peace until Nazism and all it stands for, in oppression, cruelty, and broken faith, is banished from the earth.

First, then, our conscience is clear. But, secondly, our memory is long. Herr Hitler has claimed that his sole aim was to remedy the injustices of the Treaty of Versailles, which, he contended, was the root of all evil. This it was, we are told, which had forced him to build his colossal armaments, to march his legions into Austria, to imprison its Chancellor, to absorb Austria into the German Reich. This it was that compelled him to break faith with the British and French Governments, and, despite his pledge, so recently and so solemnly reaffirmed, to invade and subdue Czechoslovakia and to attempt to reduce her people to the status of hewers of wood and drawers of water.

### "Broken Vows and Discarded Pledges"

This it was that left Herr Hitler—we are assured—with no alternative but to turn against Poland, with whom some five years ago he had solemnly signed a pact which was to run for ten years.

Faced with such a catalogue of broken vows and discarded pledges, how is it possible to escape the conclusion that the Treaty of Versailles was not a grievance to redress, but a pretext for the use of force? Five times in the last eighty years the rulers of Germany have embarked with only the slightest pretext upon a war of aggression. Against peaceful Denmark in 1864, against Austria in 1866, against France in 1870, against the whole world in 1914 to 1918, and now against France, Poland, and Great Britain in 1939.

With such a record her present rulers, had they been honest and sincere, might well have thought that they should accept to negotiate with nations who wanted nothing more than to live at peace with Germany. . . .

Herr Hitler and his Nazi associates would have none of it. Flouting all the lessons of history, ignoring or deriding even their own country's experience of British character, they preferred yet once more the path of lawlessness, the path of misery and of bloodshed, the path of anarchy and want.

Thirdly, our determination is unshaken. This war has broken out in circumstances which have no parallel. Herr Hitler is invading Poland with the help of overwhelming numbers and marked air superiority, while he acts on the defensive in the west. These methods are leading to strange illusions among the Nazi leaders, which had best be dispelled.

Let there be no mistake about this. Our determination to see this war through to the end is unshaken. We must make it clear to the Nazi leaders, and if we can to the German people, that this country, as the Prime Minister said, has not gone to war about the fate of a far-away city in a foreign land. We have decided to fight to show that aggression does not pay, and the German people must realize that this country means to go on fighting until that goal is reached . . .

### Field-Marshal Goering

Extract from his address to German workers on September 9, followed by the reply issued by the Ministry of Information

YOU (Mr. Chamberlain) cannot doubt the will for peace of the German people. It is great and deep, and the peace-will of the Fuehrer is very deep. It rests with you, Mr. Chamberlain. Will you give the word for life or death? Then give it and we will take the offer. But never again shall there be a Versailles. . . .

We are prepared for an acceptable peace and equally determined to fight to the last under the Leader, who for many years has raised up the German people. Shall we be parted from such a Leader at the wish of Great Britain? It is too monstrous to speak of it. We want peace, but peace at the price of our Leader is not to be thought of. To destroy our Leader is to destroy the German nation. . . .

### The Ministry of Information

HITLER has made many promises to foreign countries; none of them has been kept. It is therefore not surprising that no confidence is felt in any assurance he may give, and Great Britain is therefore justified in requiring that peace should be concluded with a German Government whose word may be trusted.

But the German Government have also misled the German people—who were promised "peace and honour."

They have not got peace because the German Government have deliberately pursued a policy of violence which has made war inevitable. They have not got honour because the world recognizes the crudity and violence of the German Government's charges against Poland.

"The sickening technique," as the Prime Minister called it, has become too familiar. There is no country in Europe which does not regard the present German Government as pursuing a policy which is a menace to the security and independence of all.

Great Britain is fighting for a return to decency in international relations. Until this is achieved no country is safe.

Germany may say she has no aims in the west, but the tale of limited German territorial ambitions has been told too often to inspire the slightest confidence.

Great Britain does not desire another Versailles, nor the collapse of Germany, but a just and enduring peace with any honourable German Government.

### Rt. Hon. Neville Chamberlain

I AM glad to be able to assure the House that it is evident that public opinion on the two sides of the Channel is completely in accord. The people of France and the people of Great Britain are alike determined not only to honour to the full their obligations to Poland, but also to put an end once for all to the intolerable strain of living under the perpetual threat of Nazi aggression. Our French Allies are, like ourselves, a peace-loving people, but they are no less convinced than are we that there can be no peace until the menace of Hitlerism has been finally removed. "Il faut en finir."

## *Historic Documents. XVI*

# *PAMPHLETS INSTEAD OF BOMBS*

The Nazis' reception of more than twenty million leaflets written in German and distributed over Germany by the R.A.F. was marked first by incredulity, and then by fear and fury. Below we give translations of four of these "bomphlets," as they were wittily termed by Mr. A. P. Herbert, M.P., in "Punch."

TEXT OF FIRST LEAFLET

### Warning: A Message from Great Britain

GERMAN Men and Women: The Government of the Reich have, with cold deliberation forced war upon Great Britain. They have done so knowing that it must involve mankind in a calamity worse than that of 1914. The assurances of peaceful intentions the Fuehrer gave to you and to the world in April have proved as worthless as his words at the Sportpalast last September, when he said: "We have no more territorial claims to make in Europe."

Never has government ordered subjects to their death with less excuse. This war is utterly unnecessary. Germany was in no way threatened or deprived of justice.

Was she not allowed to re-enter the Rhineland, to achieve the Anschluss, and to take back the Sudeten Germans in peace? Neither we nor any other nation would have sought to limit her advance so long as she did not violate independent non-German peoples.

Every German ambition—just to others—might have been satisfied through friendly negotiation.

President Roosevelt offered you both peace with honour and the prospect of prosperity. Instead, your rulers have condemned you to the massacre, miseries and privations of a war they cannot ever hope to win.

It is not us, but you they have deceived. For years their iron censorship has kept from you truths that even uncivilized peoples know. It has imprisoned your minds in, as it were, a concentration camp. Otherwise they would not have dared to misrepresent the combination of peaceful peoples to secure peace as hostile encirclement.

We had no enmity against you, the German people.

This censorship has also concealed from you that you have not the means to sustain protracted warfare. Despite crushing taxation, you are on the verge of bankruptcy.

Our resources and those of our Allies, in men, arms and supplies, are immense. We are too strong to break by blows and we could wear you down inexorably.

You, the German people, can, if you will, insist on peace at any time. We also desire peace, and are prepared to conclude it with any peace-loving Government in Germany.

LEAFLET DROPPED IN THIRD R.A.F. RAID

### We Shall Never Give Up

DESPITE the efforts of all men of good will to avert the catastrophe, the Nazi Government has plunged the world into war.

This war is a crime. The Germans, who are a logical people, should make a clear distinction between the pretext on which their leaders started it and the principles that have compelled the British and French democracies to defend Poland's independence.

If Poland was not to go the way of Czechoslovakia, we had to insist that the peaceful methods of negotiation should not be paralysed by threats of violence, and that any settlement should safeguard the vital interests of Poland and should be honourably carried out.

If the Chancellor of the Reich imagined that fear of war would induce the British Government to betray the cause of Poland he made a fatal mistake.

It is not England's way to break her pledged word, and, more than this, the time has come to call a halt to the rule of brute force which the Nazi Government wishes to impose on the world. . . . .

You go into this war isolated from the commonwealth of civilized peoples and having the support of nobody but Communist Russia.

You cannot win this war. You are confronted by far greater resources than your own. For years an iron censorship and a widespread system of espionage have prevented you from knowing the truth or speaking your minds about the cruelties and injustice perpetrated in your name.

Against you, you have the united strength of free peoples, who, with their eyes wide open, will fight to the last for liberty—yours as well as theirs.

We hate war as much as we know you do. But remember, Britain never gives way. Her nerves are tougher, her sinews of war stronger than yours. We shall never give up.

NOTE—*A photograph of this leaflet appears in page* 71.

LEAFLET DISTRIBUTED SEPTEMBER 21–25

### To the German People

GERMANS, note that in spite of German blood which has been shed in the Polish war:

1. Your Government's hope of successful lightning war has been destroyed by the British War Cabinet's decision to prepare for a three years' war.
2. The French Army crossed the frontier into Germany on September 6, or four days before German official sources admitted it. In the west, British troops are already standing shoulder to shoulder with their French allies.
3. The British and French Fleets have swept German merchant shipping from the oceans. Therefore your supplies of a whole range of essential war materials, such as petrol, copper, nickel, rubber, cotton, wool and fats, are almost gone.
   You can no longer rely, as you did in the last war, upon neutral supplies because your Government cannot pay for them.
4. Night after night the British Air Force has demonstrated its power by flights far into German territory.
   Germans, note!

DETAILS OF SECRET NAZI FORTUNES IN A LATER LEAFLET

### These Are Your Leaders

GERMANS! You are going into this war with hunger rations. Your belts have already been tight enough for some years.

Now read what the American newspapers say about your leaders, who are responsible for all your sufferings.

The American Press first published on September 20, 1939, with all details, a factual report revealing that Goering, Goebbels, Ribbentrop, Hess, Himmler, Ley and Streicher have invested cash and bonds, swelling their life insurances abroad to the monstrous total of $7,124,700 on their own behalf.

The well-known "Chicago Daily News" writes: "Whatever fate Nazi Germany's will be as the result of this war, Hitler's clique will not suffer need, and even if they fail to escape with their skins, at least their families will be well off."

New York's "Journal-American" confirms that the Nazi fortunes are in banks in South America, Japan, Luxemburg, Holland, Egypt, Estonia, Latvia, Finland and Switzerland. They have also large cash accounts deposited with Nazi agents and German shipping companies.

Goering, whom Hitler has nominated his successor, has a fortune of not less than £1,501,500 abroad.

Goebbels possesses in Buenos Aires, Luxemburg and Osaka, in Japan, the handsome sum of £1,798,000.

Ribbentrop is the richest of them all, since a sum of £1,948,000 is invested for him in Holland and Switzerland.

Hess, Hitler's deputy, has secret hoards amounting to £801,500 at Sao Paulo and Basle.

Ley (head of the German Labour Front) has derived handsome profits from the "Strength Through Joy" movement and possesses £378,200.

Himmler (head of the Gestapo), who watches like a lynx that no German takes more than ten marks across the frontier, has himself smuggled abroad a sum of £527,500.

Streicher (the anti-Semite propagandist), well known as the defender of German honour, has savings abroad amounting to £150,000.

Such are the men who are your leaders.

Chapter 8

# BRITAIN'S AIR FORCE AT WAR BY LAND AND SEA

*R.A.F. Attack on Kiel and Wilhelmshafen—"Leaflet Raids" on Germany—The Air Arm in the Polish Struggle—Loss of "Courageous"—Anti-Submarine Patrol and Convoy Duties—Reconnaissance Flights over Germany—Absence of Independent Air Action in the West—Bomber versus Fighter—Ground Defence—The First Weeks of Air War*

A CURIOUS feature of the opening stages of the war of 1939 was that they were expected to throw sudden and vivid light upon the weight and value of the air arm, but that they entirely failed to do so. For ten or fifteen years before that the world had been discussing the possibilities inherent in the total use of air power, and the consensus of opinion was that it might be the decisive factor in a major war, and that it might strike with great suddenness.

Yet when the war came the aerial armies of the opposing countries did not strike. Only half an hour after Mr. Neville Chamberlain broadcast to the Empire on the morning of the 3rd of September, the air raid sirens were sounding in London. The immediate reaction of the instructed populace was that aerial bombardment, in accordance with the predictions of the experts, was imminent.

No such bombardment took place. It was the same again in the early morning of the 4th of September and in the morning of the 6th of September. The sirens sounded; the people, who had been fed with the predictions of the air experts, expected the totalitarian attack; but no attack came. Thereafter it appeared that independent air action against Britain was, for some as yet inexplicable reason, to be delayed.

Similarly, the people of Britain expected the Royal Air Force to make instant and extensive attack on military positions in Germany. Instead, there were reconnaissance raids and the dropping of leaflets, and there were co-operation flights for the Army and the Navy, but no independent bombing attacks on objectives in the heart of Germany.

**Pamphlets, Not Bombs**

So far as the first few days were concerned, then, the summing up must take notice of the unexpected lull in air action upon strategical objectives behind the lines. Cities, instead of being subject to incessant bombing, were completely free; and the citizens, who had previously been going about in the expectation of attack at any moment, gradually began to wonder if there would be an attack at all.

But although cities far from the main theatres of operation in Poland and on the Western Front were left alone, vigorous actions were being fought in other parts. In Poland itself the bombing by the German air forces was ceaseless. It grew in intensity as the move towards Warsaw gathered momentum. And finally Warsaw was subjected to intensive raiding and dive bombing.

So far as British action was concerned the first big event was the attack upon the German Fleet at Wilhelmshafen and in the Kiel district on September 4, 1939. It was a remarkable attack which, as can now be distinguished when the details are viewed in their true perspective, took heavy toll of the British machines and aircraft crews, but which also achieved success in disabling an important unit of the German Fleet.



**THE FIRST RAID WARNING**

**Above a policeman is blowing his whistle and warning people to take cover after the sirens sounded on September 3, 1939. Policemen with similar notices patrolled the streets during air raids in the War of 1914-18.**

*Photo, Topical*

Since this action is the first notable air action of the war of 1939, it is worth outlining it so far as it is possible to do so while the war continues. The points to be especially noticed about it are that the British pilots and aircraft crews showed courage and determination and that the German defences proved better, perhaps, than had been expected.

A number of aeroplanes set off for this raid. They ran into heavy rain storms which made their task harder, but which must also have made the task of the defences more difficult.

The first flight of three machines converged from sides and end upon a German "pocket" battleship lying a few miles on the east of Schilling Roads. They flew mast high and made direct hits with heavy bombs. The enemy was taken by surprise, but heavy anti-aircraft fire was opened and German defending fighter aeroplanes took off, probably from the aerodrome at Sylt. But the raid was continued, and at Brunsbüttel another naval vessel was located and attacked.

**Gallant Kiel Raid**

The pilots engaged in this raid were drawn from Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland. Naturally there was a proportion of casualties.

The leader of the first flight thus described his part in this, the first surprise aerial attack of the war:

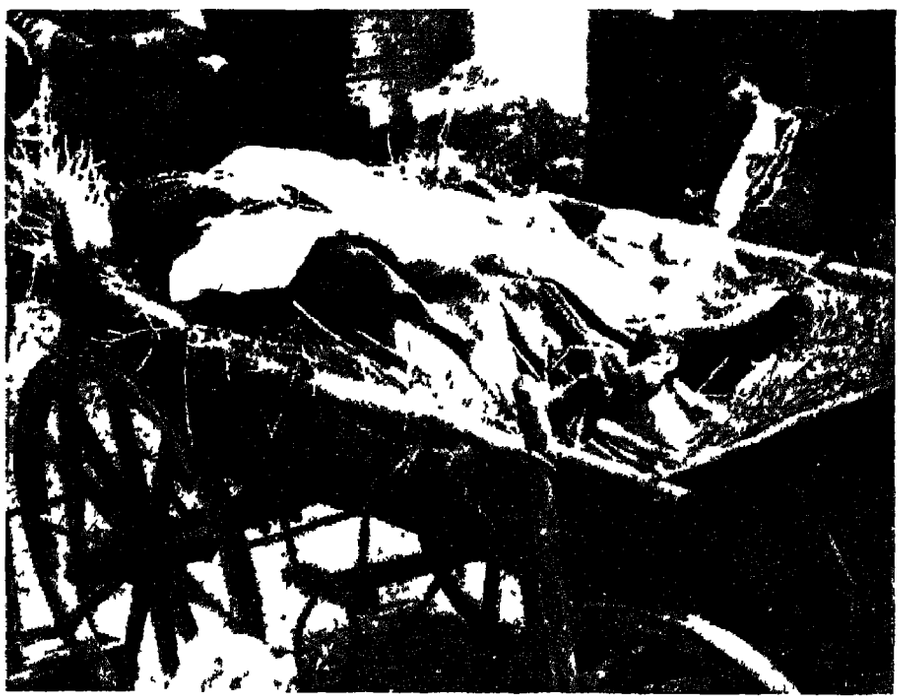
"We reached Wilhelmshafen after two hours of flying. . . . Breaking the flight formation we flew singly into the Schilling Roads.

"We could see a German warship taking on stores. . . . We could even see some washing hanging on the line. Undaunted by the washing we proceeded to bomb the battleship.

"Flying at 100 feet above mast height all three aircraft in the flight converged on her. I flew straight ahead. The pilot of the second aircraft came across from one side, and the third crossed from the other side.

"When we flew on the top of the battleship we could see the crews running fast to their stations. We dropped —— bombs.





**BLACK SHADOWS OVER POLAND**

Thousands of non-combatants were killed and wounded in the appalling air raids which Hitler ordered on open towns and villages in Poland. These pictures tell the story of the raid on the village of Krzemieniec on September 25, 1939; the black bombers swoop (top photograph), and (above) women victims are carried away in a farm cart.

*Photos, Wide World; Planet News*

"The second pilot, flying behind, saw two hit. We came round, and the ship's pom-pom guns began to fire as we headed for home. My navigator saw shells bursting almost on the tail of the aircraft."

By now the sky had clouded over again. The aircraft were driving through blinding rain. As this bomber turned on the homeward course the navigator noticed machine-gun tracer bullets nipping past the port wing tip. They looked like small blue electric sparks.

As the pilot of the third aircraft skimmed in his turn towards the warship, he saw the first bomb drop from the second bomber. "To me," he said, "it appeared to drop dead amidships."

By now the battleship's crew were all at action stations, and the third pilot got, as he said, "some hot stuff." This pilot dropped his bombs and made a half circuit round the battleship. Wheeling, he noticed three bursts of A.A. fire at the leader's machine.

By 7.30 p.m. the flight of R.A.F. machines were back at their station.

Acting Flight-Lieutenant Doran, the officer responsible for the narrative quoted here, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. The "London Gazette" stated that he led an attack against an enemy cruiser. "In face of enemy gunfire and under extremely bad weather conditions he pressed home a successful low attack with great determination.' His age was 26. A similar honour fell to Flying Officer McPherson, who, said the "Gazette," was "forced by extremely bad weather conditions to fly close to the enemy coast at very low altitudes. These flights made possible a successful raid on enemy naval forces." McPherson was the 21-year-old son of a D.S.O.

The raid must be adjudged a success because it is fairly certain that one important unit of the German Fleet at least was put out of action for two or three months. The Royal Air Force had shown in its first major action great dash and determination and had indicated that, although the effects of bombing on battleships were still to be tested, a good deal of damage could at any rate be done by determined aircraft crews ready to come down into the mouths of the guns before launching their bombs.

On the same day that the announcement of the raid on the Kiel district was made, there was news of the first of the leaflet raids over Germany. British bombing aeroplanes flew very high and flung out bundles of leaflets printed in German and putting the British point of view. The aeroplanes were not actually attacked although, according to a subsequent statement by Mr. Neville Chamberlain in the House of Commons, the German defences were put into motion.

**Goering's Bluster**

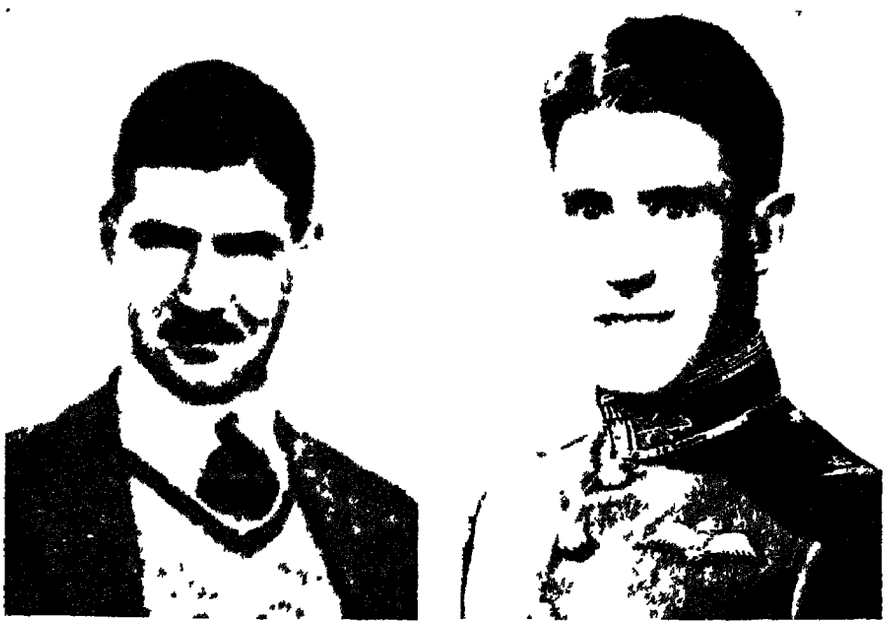
On September 9, Field-Marshal Goering referred to these raids and said that if the leaflets were changed to bombs there would be immediate reprisals. The Royal Air Force's response to the Field-Marshal's warning was a further series of raids. The German people were prohibited from reading the leaflets. On the first of these raids six million were dropped.

After this opening of the air war on the part of Britain there was a lull in the west, and the centre of aerial action shifted back to Poland. On Tuesday, September 5, Polish broadcasts claimed that 30 Polish aeroplanes had bombed Berlin and returned safely. German reconnaissance flights were reported to have been made over France, but there was no confirmation of the report. Paris, however, did have its first air raid warning.

On this day, also, the beginning occurred of what may be called the Zeppelin mystery. An explosion at Friedrichshafen had been reported from Zurich, and this report was subsequently elaborated in the newspapers of various neutral countries. It suggested that Friedrichshafen had been raided by British and French machines. There were even claims that the Germans had shot down seven French aeroplanes. Actually, however, no raid took place at this time by any of the Allied air forces. Another statement about the Zeppelins was that the airships would be used for the conveyance of oil from the Russian wells to Germany.

**Mystery of Friedrichshafen**

The longest air raid warning of the first fortnight of the war occurred at 6.30 a.m. on Wednesday, September 6. The report was that enemy aircraft were approaching the east coast. British interceptor fighters took off in fairly large numbers, and gunfire was heard at various points. Fantastic rumours spread like wildfire after this raid warning. Some said that Chatham had been bombed; many reported British and German machines down in various parts of the country.



HEROES OF THE KIEL CANAL RAID

For their gallant share in the R.A.F. raid on the German naval bases near the Kiel Canal on September 4, 1939, the first British air action of the war, the two airmen above, Acting Flight-Lieut. K. C. Doran (left), who led the raid, and Flying Officer A. McPherson (right), were awarded the D.F.C. The map below, reprinted by permission of "The Daily Telegraph," shows Brunsbüttel, at the entrance to the canal, where German ships were bombed.

*Photos, G.P.U. British International Photos*




# WARNUNG!

## England an das deutsche Volk

Die Nazi-Regierung hat, trotz der Bemühungen der führenden Großmächte, die Welt in einen Krieg gestürzt.

Dieser Krieg ist ein Verbrechen. Das deutsche Volk muß zwischen dem Vorwand, den seine Regierung benutzt, um den Krieg vom Zaun zu brechen und den Grundsätzen, die England und Frankreich zur Verteidigung Polens zwingen, ganz klar unterscheiden.

Von Anfang an hat die englische Regierung erklärt, daß an der polnischen Frage nichts ist, was einen europäischen Krieg mit allen seinen tragischen Folgen rechtfertigen kann.

Fünf Monate nach dem Münchener Vertrag wurde die Selbstständigkeit der Tschechoslovakei brutal zerrissen. Wenn Polen nicht auch von dem gleichen Schicksal ereilt werden soll, dann mußten wir darauf bestehen, daß friedliche Verhandlungsmethoden nicht durch Gewaltandrohungen unmöglich gemacht werden, daß die zu treffende Abmachung die Lebensrechte Polens gewährleistet und auch ehrlich gehalten wird. Ein Diktat konnten wir weder zulassen noch annehmen.

Wenn Herr Hitler glaubte, die englische Regierung werde aus Angst vor dem Kriege die Polen im Stich lassen, so hat er sich schwer getäuscht. Erstens bricht England sein einmal gegebenes Wort nicht. Außerdem ist es aber jetzt, der brutalen Gewalt, die die Nazi-Regierung der Welt aufzwingen will, ein deutliches Halt zu bieten.

Mit diesem Krieg stellt sich der Reichskanzler gegen den unbeugsamen Willen der englischen Regierung, einen Willen, hinter dem nicht nur die gesamten Hilfsquellen und Mittel des englischen

**WARNING TO GERMAN PEOPLE**

Above is a reproduction of one side of a leaflet dropped over German territory during reconnaissance flights by R.A.F. machines. A translation of this document is given in page 68.

Subsequent investigation of the circumstances showed that there had, in fact, been no engagement with the enemy, but that our own aeroplanes and our own guns had in a few instances made recognition mistakes and opened fire. At least one British machine was damaged in this way, but no one was hurt. Not one of the many rumours approached the truth.

Bombing by the German air force of positions in Poland continued, and a Warsaw wireless bulletin stated that fifteen raids had been made on the city by 70 bombers. The total losses of German machines to date was said to have been 300. It is worth remarking here that losses cannot be assessed with anything approaching accuracy until long after a war has finished, because there are so many conflicting statements on both sides, and because both sides must, for military reasons, conceal their losses as far as possible.

Sunday, September 10, is to be noted as the day on which Canada declared war on Germany. While peace still prevailed Britain had sent a mission to Canada and had arranged to place large orders for aircraft with aeroplane constructors in that Dominion. In general, Canada was from the first looked upon as one of the greatest sources of supply of aircraft and personnel, and her entry into the war at the side of Great Britain increased the potential strength of the Royal Air Force to an enormous degree.

During the days that followed Canada's declaration of war the bombing of Warsaw by the Germans intensified. Herr Hitler announced that he

would no longer limit his aerial operations, and that open towns would in future be looked on as legitimate marks by his airmen. Warsaw was daily and almost hourly visited by German bombers, and it was said that the German machines worked to a precise schedule. On the Warsaw wireless big German losses were frequently reported, but they had no effect on the frequency or the intensity of the raids.

**Sinking of 'Courageous'**

On Sunday, September 17, Britain's air arm suffered its heaviest loss, when the aircraft carrier "Courageous" was sunk by a German submarine. "Courageous" could carry 48 aeroplanes of the Fleet Air Arm, though at the time she was sunk she bore a reduced complement. She was a very old ship, having been laid down in 1917 as a cruiser and subsequently converted to an aircraft carrier.

The sinking of "Courageous" brought into focus a side of air work which had not been very prominently in the public eye beforehand; this was the side dealing with such things as anti-submarine patrol and with convoy work and coastal reconnaissance. Every day the Coastal Command of the Royal Air Force had been performing long oversea flights, watching for enemy submarines and, when possible, attacking them. A great many such attacks were made, but the claims were kept down to a minimum because of difficulties in providing proof.

On some occasions submarines were attacked with bombs, and oil was seen to rise to the surface, but claims were not put in because no other evidence could be secured. One submarine, however, was positively sunk and seen to break up by members of the attacking aircraft's crew. The pilot on this occasion made two attacks, the first one causing the submarine to rise fairly high from the water, and the second disposing of it.

**Successes Summarized**

To sum up the first fortnight of the air war, it must be said that the Royal Air Force was mainly concentrated on work in collaboration with the Navy and the Army. It was in attacks on the German fleet (including submarines) and in reconnaissance flights that the R.A.F. machines were chiefly engaged; and independent air action, such as attacks by bombs on munition factories and railheads behind the lines, was not yet begun.

In many essentials the beginning of the air war of 1939 resembled the end of the air war of 1918. There were the same reconnaissance patrols over German territory by French and British aeroplanes; the same incidental encounters between machines; the same photographic patrols; the same gunnery observations and even the same observation balloons.

On the Western Front, indeed, the scene was very similar, so far as aerial action was concerned, to that of the earlier war. This state of affairs was totally at variance with the predictions of most of the experts who, almost to a man, had stated that immediate and



**BRITAIN'S AIR CHIEF**

**Air Chief Marshal Sir Cyril Newall (above) served with great distinction in the R.F.C. during the 1914-18 war, being mentioned three times in despatches. He took his pilot's certificate in 1911.**

*Photo, Vandyk*

heavy independent air action would take place after the outbreak of any major war. The British air staff, however, did not lose sight of the possibility of a sudden change in German methods.

In order to aid in the detection and recognition of enemy aeroplanes approaching England, all civil flying was stopped at the outbreak of war and a large prohibited area (extending right down from the north of Scotland to the south of England) was established.

In this area no flying of any kind by machines other than those of the Royal Air Force was allowed. In the other parts of the United Kingdom flying was permitted, but only by those aircraft which had obtained a special pass from the Air Ministry. The reason for these restrictions was to enable enemy aircraft to be instantly picked up and recognized, as already mentioned; and also to ensure that civil machines would not be attacked by the enemy.

After a fortnight of the war, however, it was found that the risks of attack seemed to be less than had originally been supposed, and an increase in the numbers of civil permits was contemplated. It was also planned to re-open some of the regular air lines between England and France and between England and certain neutral countries.

Lessons cannot be drawn from the unexpected opening stages of the war. Only a few cautious inferences are permissible. Where aeroplane met aeroplane, the combats were chiefly between large bombing machines and small fighters.

One interesting point (on which there has been much controversy), refers to the effectiveness of the defensive fire which ships can bring to bear against attacking aircraft, and to the effectiveness of anti-aircraft fire in general.

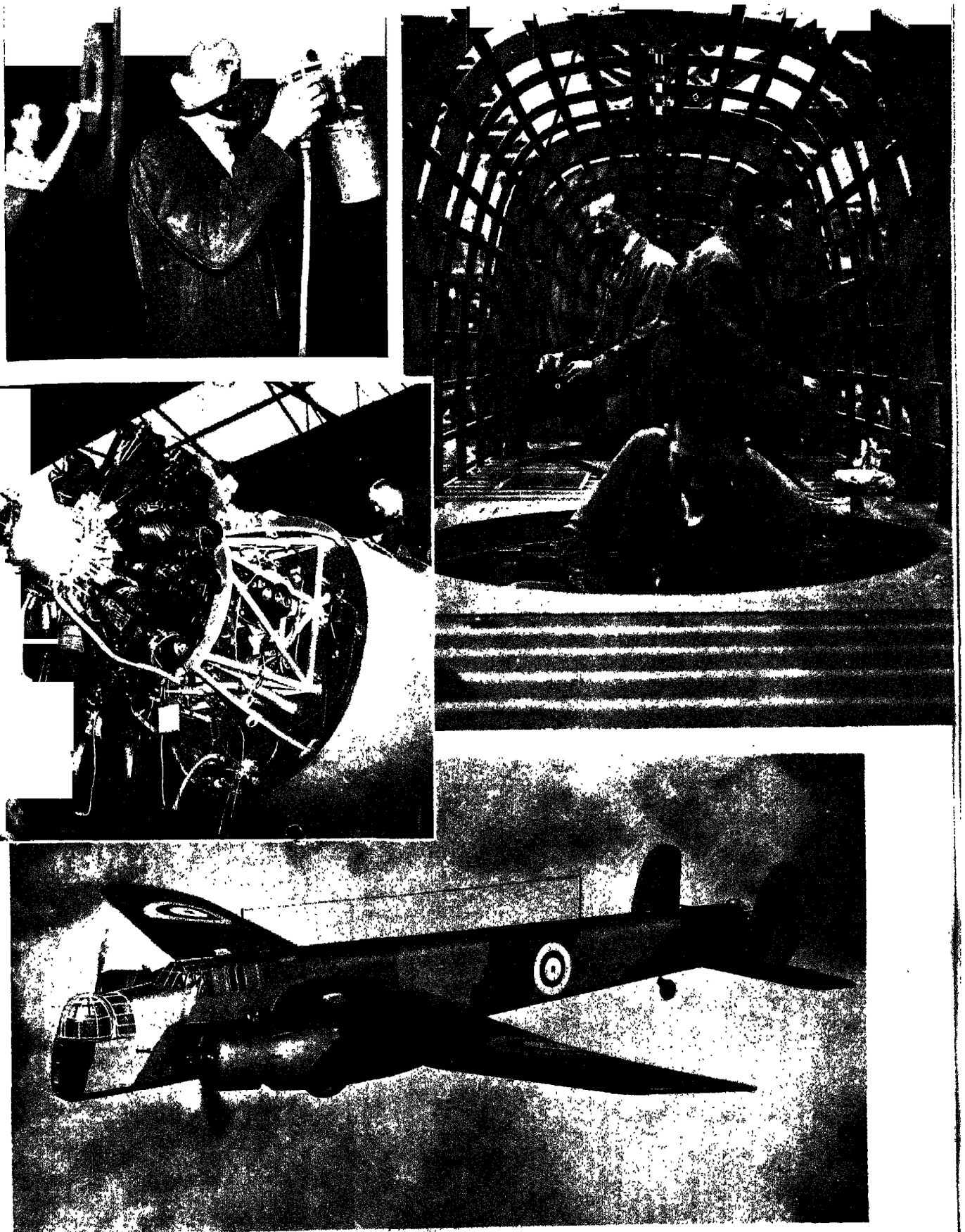
In the heat of the action it was difficult for those airmen who returned from the Kiel raid to notice exactly what was happening, and it is therefore difficult to estimate how much damage was done to British machines by anti-aircraft fire and how much by the defending fighters sent up probably from the big air base at Sylt.

**Air War in Poland**

While many limitations apply to what may be said about the war on the Western Front (meaning thereby the war as it developed at first between France and Britain on the one hand and Germany on the other), no such limitations apply to the war in Poland. It is appropriate, therefore, to conclude this survey of the first two weeks of the war by noting the course of the air action in Poland.

Bombing by the German forces was directed mainly on Warsaw and Vilna, to the north-east. After these two there came Gdynia (on the Baltic, close to Danzig), Posen, Cracow and Lwow. These were the places which received the fullest force of the German bombardment. The Poles, on the other hand, bombed Berlin and a few objectives beyond the German lines south of Cracow. The Polish bombing does not seem at any time to have reached any very great intensity, probably because the Poles were far less lavishly equipped with bombing machines than the Germans.

If these places and the ones which came next to them in intensity of bombing be marked out on the map, and if the dates at which the raids were reported be noted as well, it becomes clear that the Germans used their bombing



*Photos, Central Press*

## INS AND OUTS OF A BRITISH BOMBER

This series of photographs shows stages in the construction of a heavy bomber : (top, left) Paint-spraying the fuselage. In wartime all military aircraft are camouflaged, and the British Air Ministry favours "shadow shading"; (centre, left) one of the two Armstrong-Siddeley "Tiger" radial engines as fitted to the "Whitley" bomber ; (top, right) interior of the all-metal fuselage of the "Whitley"; (above) the completed "Whitley" bomber seen on a trial flight. It carries a heavy load of bombs and five machine-guns, and its range is over a thousand miles and its speed about 215 m.p.h.

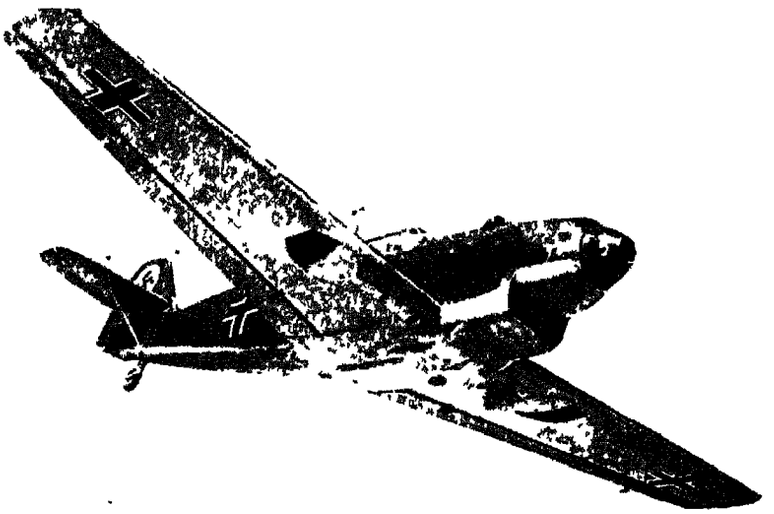
forces all the time as an aid to their ground troops. Even in the Polish campaign, then, independent bombing in the sense understood by most pre-war students of aerial operations was absent. Open towns were bombed mercilessly by the Germans, but the bombing was almost invariably directed at towns which had to be "prepared" for the advance of mechanized and then of motorized troops.

**No Independent Bombing**

Very careful preparation by aerial attack seems to have been made at most of the key points. In this sense the Germans in their Polish campaign were using aircraft as long-range guns to aid their heavy artillery.

Looking now at the position at the end of the first fortnight, it is impossible to estimate with any accuracy the strengths of the opposing air forces. It was known that both sides had extensive stored reserves and immediate reserves, and therefore on the outbreak of war it must be assumed that the air forces of both sides were largely increased. Behind the air forces were the factories. Here again there was a big increase in output immediately on the outbreak of war. Figures are not available, but it is certain the Allies together were producing more aeroplanes each month than was Germany.

As for the future, the use of the Dominions as sources of supply both of men and materials makes it certain that the Allies will maintain their lead and gradually increase it until it becomes overwhelming. Training and manufacture can proceed in the Dominions free from the interruptions of aerial bombardment.



THE FAMOUS MESSERSCHMITT FIGHTER

*The Germans placed great faith in the value of the Messerschmitt Type 109 single-seater fighter, seen above. Powered by a 950 h.p. Daimler-Benz engine, it was credited with a speed of over 350 m.p.h. But operations on the Western Front showed it to be outclassed by the most recent types of British fighter aeroplanes*

*Real Photographs Co*

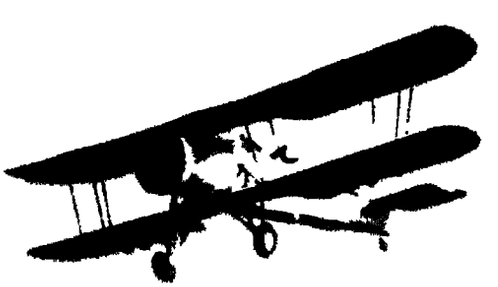
One other thing is to be borne in mind when the relative powers of the opposing forces are being estimated; it concerns technical merit.

It is always a mistake to underestimate the strength of an enemy, but the first fortnight of the war seemed to show that the technical supremacy attributed to Germany was a myth. It may be that in the future new and remarkable German aeroplanes will make their appearance and that they will show a net superiority in climb and speed and range. But the first two weeks of war tended to support the view that the technical eminence of the Germans had, during the peace, been grossly exaggerated; and that, in fact, the aeroplanes of Britain and of France were as good as those used in the German air force and in some instances better.

**Nazi Chicanery Exposed**

On the Western Front the Messerschmitt single-seat fighters came into conflict more than once with French Morane fighters and were worsted. The Germans also have the Heinkel 112 fighters and the new twin-engined Messerschmitt fighter, the 110. These were not reported as being in action on the Western Front during the first two weeks of the war. They may appear later, but it is not thought that Germany entered the war with many of them in service in the squadrons.

As for the proportions of fighters and bombers in the opposing air forces, the information gleaned during the first fortnight was meagre. The inference was that Germany had a larger proportion of bombers to fighters than the British and French. At any rate, the conclusion which most observers reached was that the opposing bombing forces were ranged well out of reach behind the lines on both sides, and that they were ready for use as independent striking forces or as forces co-operating with the Army and Navy.





U-BOAT HUNTING FROM THE AIR

**This remarkable photograph, taken from the S.S. "American Farmer," shows a British Fairey Swordfish torpedo-bomber attacking the U-boat which had just sunk the British freighter "Kafiristan." The liner "American Farmer" rescued all but six of the crew of the freighter. The airmen can be seen scanning the sea for a trace of the enemy.**

*Photo, Wide World*

Chapter 9

# POLISH TRAGEDY: THE STAB IN THE BACK

*Stalin Intervenes, to Help his "blood-brothers" in Poland—Mass Propaganda for the Soviet—"Liquidation" of the Landowners—Intensified German Attacks on Warsaw—Battles of Extermination—Poles' Last Stand—Line of Demarcation and the Fourth Partition—Germany's Eastward Way Blocked*

STALIN'S move was not entirely unexpected. The Soviet-German Pact, signed in Moscow on August 23, was an indication of the Soviet's sympathies; and when eight days later—Sept. 1—the German armies invaded Poland, the Kremlin registered no sense of shock and carefully refrained from any criticism, let alone denunciation of the act of aggression. Shortly afterwards an increase in the Soviet standing army was foreshadowed by a new conscription bill, and it was stated that Russia had some two million men under arms. The rapid advance of the Nazis was watched with the deepest interest in Soviet official circles, and one of the first reactions was a partial mobilization and the dispatch of large numbers of troops to the Minsk and Kiev military districts adjoining the Polish border.

Then, as the campaign progressed, the Soviet authorities began to reveal an interest in the fate of those whom they called their "blood-brothers"—the White Russians and Ukrainians inhabiting for the most part the districts of Poland which before the Russo-Polish war of 1920 formed part of Russian territory.

Stalin showed his hand a few hours after it was announced that the Soviet had settled its frontier difficulties with Japan in the Far East. On Saturday evening, September 16, M. Molotov, Soviet Premier and Commissar for Foreign Affairs, summoned the Polish Ambassador in Moscow and handed him a Note which stated that Soviet Russia had decided to take military action against Poland. "The Polish-German war," it read, "has shown the internal bankruptcy of the Polish State.

**Stalin Shows His Hand**

"During the course of ten days' hostilities, Poland has lost all her industrial areas and cultural centres. Warsaw, as the capital of Poland, no longer exists. The Polish Government has disintegrated and no longer shows any sign of life.

"This means that the Polish State and its Government have, in point of fact, ceased to exist. In the same way, the agreements concluded between the U.S.S.R. and Poland have ceased to operate.

Left to her own devices and bereft of leadership, Poland has become a suitable field for all manner of hazards and surprises, which may constitute a threat to the U.S.S.R. For these reasons the Soviet Government, which has hitherto been neutral, cannot any longer preserve a neutral attitude towards these facts.

"The Soviet Government also cannot view with indifference the fact that the kindred Ukrainian and White Russian people who live on Polish territory and who are at the mercy of fate should be left defenceless.

"In the circumstances, the Soviet Government has directed the High Command of the Red Army to order the troops to cross the frontier and take under their protection the life and property of the population of Western Ukraine and Western White Russia



**RED ARMY LEADER**

**Marshal Klement Efremovitch Voroshilov, above, Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army, first won fame in the Civil War as leader of the Ukrainian armies against the Whites. His official title is People's Commissar of Defence.**

*Photo, Planet News*

"At the same time the Soviet Government proposes to take all measures to extricate the Polish people from the unfortunate war into which it was dragged by its unwise leaders, and to enable it to live a peaceful life."

The Polish Ambassador in Moscow refused to accept the Note, but reported its contents to his Government, who approved his action. He asked for his passports.

In a broadcast to the Soviet people delivered at 9.30 a.m. the next morning, M. Molotov repeated his statements concerning Poland's alleged insolvency and virtual collapse. "In view of this state of affairs," he proceeded, "the treaties concluded between the Soviet Union and Poland have ceased to operate. A situation has arisen in Poland which demands of the Soviet Government special concern for the security of its State. Poland has become a fertile field for any accidental and unexpected contingency which may create a menace to the Soviet Union.... Nor can it be demanded of the Soviet Government that it should remain indifferent to the fate of its blood-brothers the Ukrainian and White Russians inhabiting Poland, who even formerly were nations without any rights, and who have now been entirely abandoned to their fate. The Soviet Government deems it its sacred duty to extend the hand of assistance to them."

**'Soviet's Sacred Duty'**

By this time the Russian invasion of Poland had begun. At four o'clock on Sunday morning troops of the "Workers' and Peasants' Red Army" began to cross the whole frontier from Latvia to Rumania. Local forces of Poles who had not been drawn upon to meet the Nazis did their best to stem this new invasion. They were soon overborne, however, and pushed aside. The Red Army advanced in overwhelming numbers, supported by huge quantities of tanks and armoured cars, while their air force acted as the advance guard. By the evening the Russians had reached points more than thirty miles from the frontier, and at dawn the invading troops began their march again.

Soon what little resistance there was became sporadic and half-hear[illegible] The defenders realized that now





**RED ARMY OVER THE BORDER**

When the Russians crossed the frontier into Poland they began an immediate campaign for the "Sovietizing" of the Polish peasants, and the photograph on the right shows Soviet soldiers distributing Moscow newspapers to peasants near Vilna. Above, Polish peasants are greeting Red Army tanks rumbling past them at Grodetsk.

*Photos, Planet News*

were fighting on two fronts they could not possibly win, or even hope to hold out until the winter. With sullen resignation they threw down their arms; for them the war was over.

Propaganda was used with good effect to smooth the path of the invaders. There were reports of Soviet tanks whose crews shouted that they were come to Poland not as conquerors but as friends. "We have come to fight the Nazis," some are reported to have declared, and who can blame the simple soldiers and peasants for believing them? Others declared that they were come as liberators not from the Nazi yoke but from that of the Polish landed gentry. They held out to the poor villagers a prospect of land for the taking, and in Poland, as in Russia twenty years before, the bait was eagerly swallowed. From this place and that came news of savage attacks on officials and landlords, and some said that it was the practice of the Red Army to kill all the officers captured, but to let the rank and file go free as soon as they had handed in their arms.

Hardly had the wave of armed forces passed over a village when what was in effect a second invasion began. Behind the Red Army came a body of some three thousand propagandists—actors, journalists, poets, musicians, printers, type-setters and cinema operators. This second army was armed not with rifles and machine-guns but with hundreds of thousands of photographs of "Our Stalin," and huge supplies of Moscow newspapers calculated to give a most favourable impression of the Soviet regime. As they followed in the wake of the Red Army, these propagandists of the intelligentsia distributed the photographs and newspapers, and then proceeded to open theatres, where Soviet plays were at once staged, to give concerts and shows of Soviet films, and to set up newspapers and pamphlets in the Polish language for free distribution.

One unsavoury feature of this Sovietization of the occupied territory has been referred to—the "liquidation," of the landowners, officials, better-class peasants and priests. Another of a happier kind was the "rescue" of the Jews from their position of servitude and persecution. In many townships Jews were given places in the local administration, and tribute was openly paid to Jewish contributions to culture.

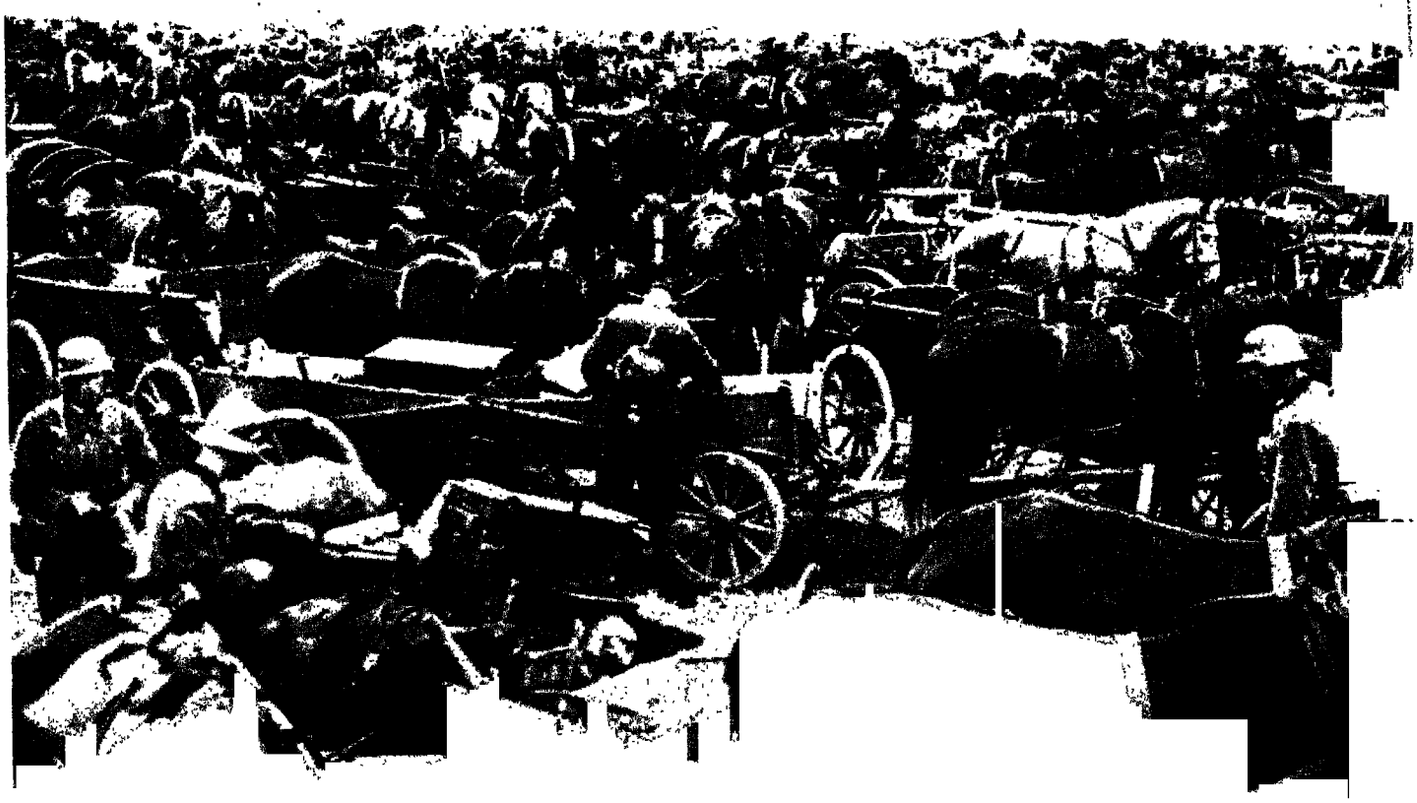
While the Russians developed their attack on the Polish rear, the Germans intensified their assaults on Warsaw, and did their utmost to pinch out the salient lying to the west and to prevent the Polish divisions cut off in the advance from joining in the defence of the capital. This was, beyond a doubt, the most hotly contested struggle of the war, but the result was inevitable.



## GREAT HAULS OF MEN AND MATERIAL IN THE NAZI NET

So swift and so carefully planned was the German advance into Poland that thousands of Polish troops were surrounded before they had a chance to get to grips with their enemies. Those seen above, waiting to be taken away to prisoners' camps, were captured in the Polish Corridor. Material was also captured in abundance by the rapidly-moving German army, as the photograph below, of Polish wagons and horses, testifies.

*Photos, Wide World: International Graphic Press*



"In a series of battles of extermination," read the German communiqué, "of which the greatest and most decisive was in the Vistula curve, the Polish army, numbering a million men, has been defeated, taken prisoner or scattered. Not a single Polish active or reserve division, not a single independent brigade, has escaped this fate. Only fractions of single bands escaped immediate annihilation by fleeing into the marshy territory in East Poland. There they were defeated by Soviet troops."

In another communiqué it was claimed that in the week's battle on the Bzura line the Germans had taken 105,000 prisoners, and many more were still being brought in. "To this must be added," went on the communiqué, "great sanguinary losses by the enemy. Enormous quantities of war material have been captured."

With the surrender of the Polish forces which had been holding out at Gdynia since the beginning of the war, Polish resistance was now being kept up in four places only—at Warsaw; Modlin, the great fortress built by Napoleon at the confluence of the Vistula and the Bug, some twenty miles north-west of Warsaw; on the peninsula of Hela, near Danzig; and round Lwow.

On Sept. 20 von Brauchitsch claimed in an order of the day that German war operations were concluded, and he congratulated all ranks on their quick victory over an enemy who "resisted bitterly, and was so often in numerical superiority."

Successful indeed had been the German invasion. What of the Russians who in the timing of their intervention had shown such a nice sense of the appropriate moment?

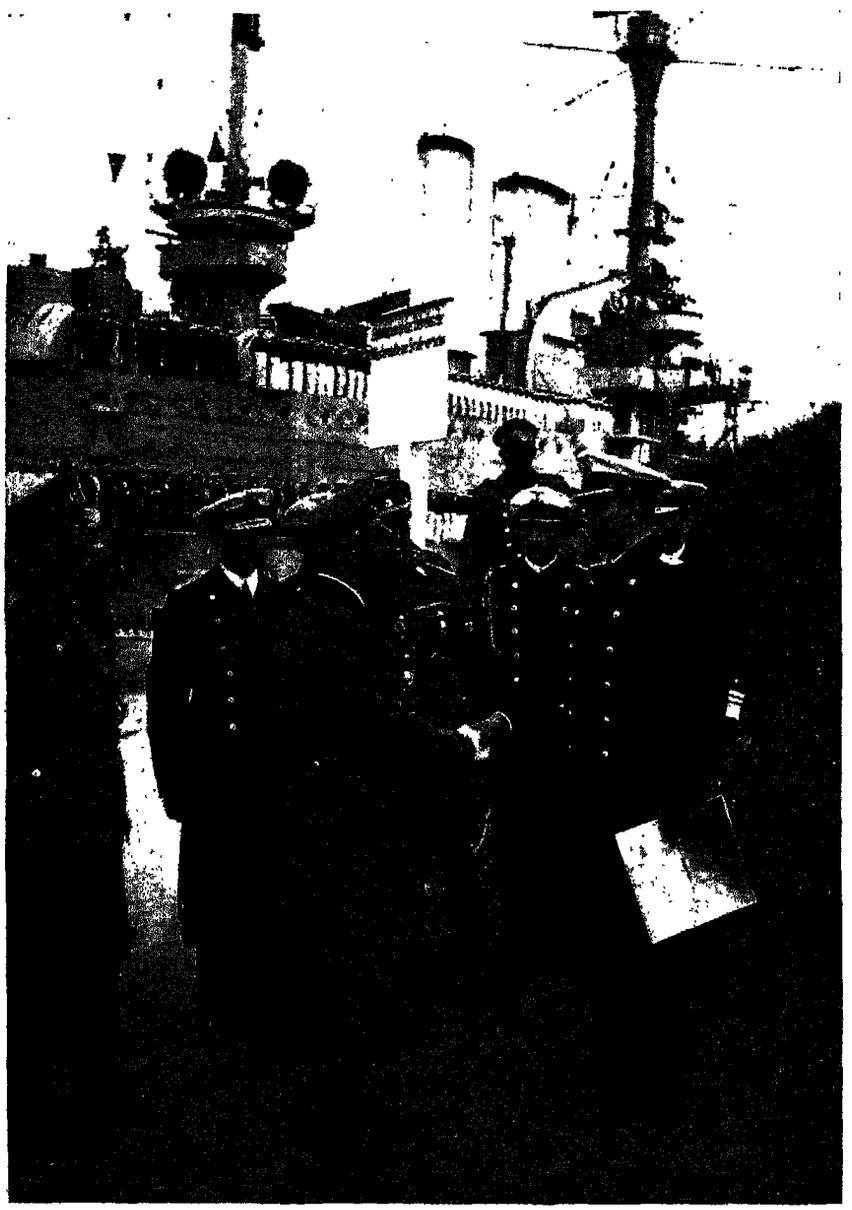
**Calendar of the Red Invasion**

In brief, they were proceeding steadily with their march to the west. First, they wiped out the pocket of Polish territory lying between East Prussia and Russia, driving over the frontier into Lithuania those remnants of the defenders who survived the battle, where these were speedily interned. On Sept. 19 the Russians captured Vilna after two hours' fighting, and they also took a number of towns in the Western Ukraine; and their cavalry and motorized units reached the outskirts of Lwow, which for some days past had been the goal of the German forces advancing from Przemysl. The rapid progress made by the Red Army across the East Polish plains was largely due to their employment of numbers of tankettes, medium and large tanks.

On September 20 the Soviet communiqué announced that the Russians had taken Grodno, in Western White Russia, and Kowel and Lwow in Western Ukraine. In the period of Sunday to Wednesday, they claimed, the Red Army had "disarmed three Polish infantry divisions, two cavalry brigades, and many small Polish Army units. According to data which is far from complete, over 60,000 officers and men have been taken prisoner. The fortified areas of Vilna, Baranowicze, Molodeczno and Sarny were taken with all their armaments, artillery and ammunition. Of the large quantity of captured war material there has so far been registered 280 artillery guns and 120 aeroplanes. The registration of the material taken is still in progress."

A little later it was announced that German troops fighting round Lwow had been relieved by Russians, as this town was in the zone that was to be allotted to Soviet Russia. By September 21 the Russians had occupied the whole of the frontier with Rumania and looked across the border to Ruthenia.

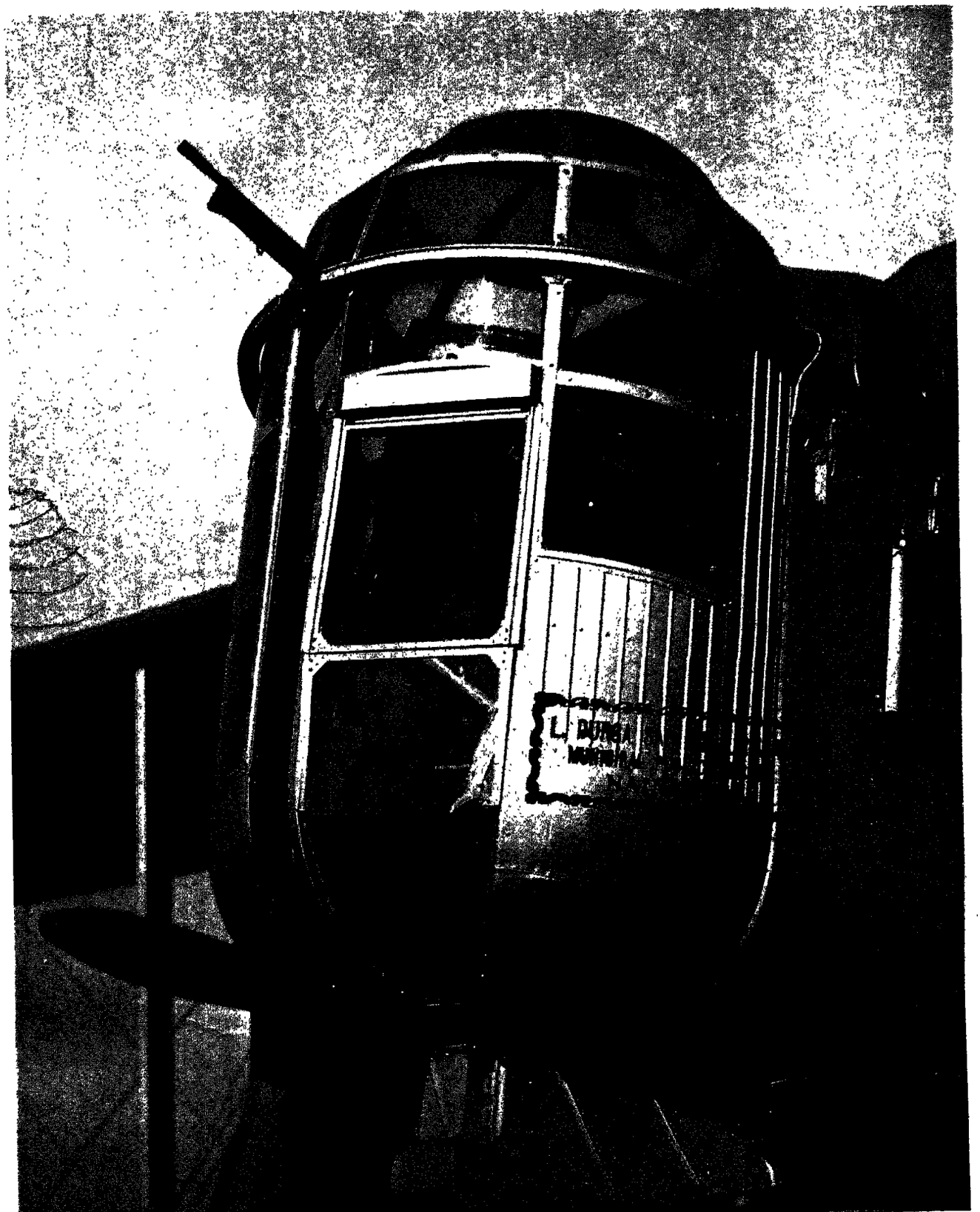
Now it was that mention of the line of demarcation agreed upon by Russia and Germany became of daily occurrence. An intelligent anticipation of



**WHERE POLAND DEFIED HIS MIGHT**

**For several days the garrison of the Westerplatte, a Polish fort on the outskirts of Danzig, resisted attacks by land and air forces, and bombardment by the battleship "Schleswig-Holstein." After the reduction of this fortress, Hitler visited it and is seen above, greeting the commander of the "Schleswig-Holstein," which is moored in the background, its crew paraded on deck.**

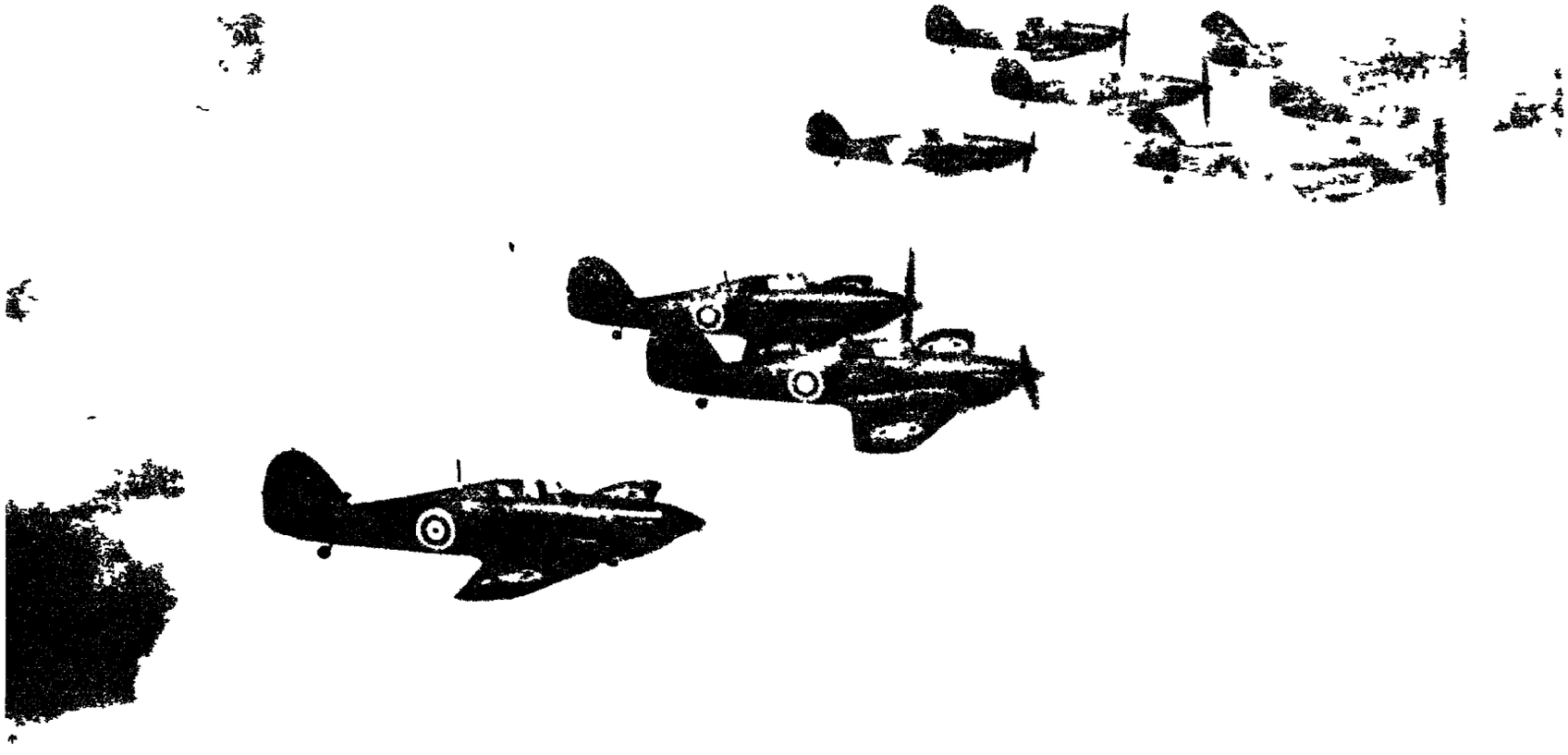
*Photo, Mondiale*



*Photo, Charles E. Brown*

**GUNNER IN A 'GLASS' HOUSE**

The photograph above shows the enclosed and revolving gun-turret situated in the nose of the Boulton Paul "Overstrand" bomber. This ingenious device enables the gunner, by means of a power-operated mechanism, to swivel himself and his weapon around with a minimum of effort, and to maintain his accuracy of fire unhampered by the force of the slipstream. The larger British bombers carry a heavy defensive armament.



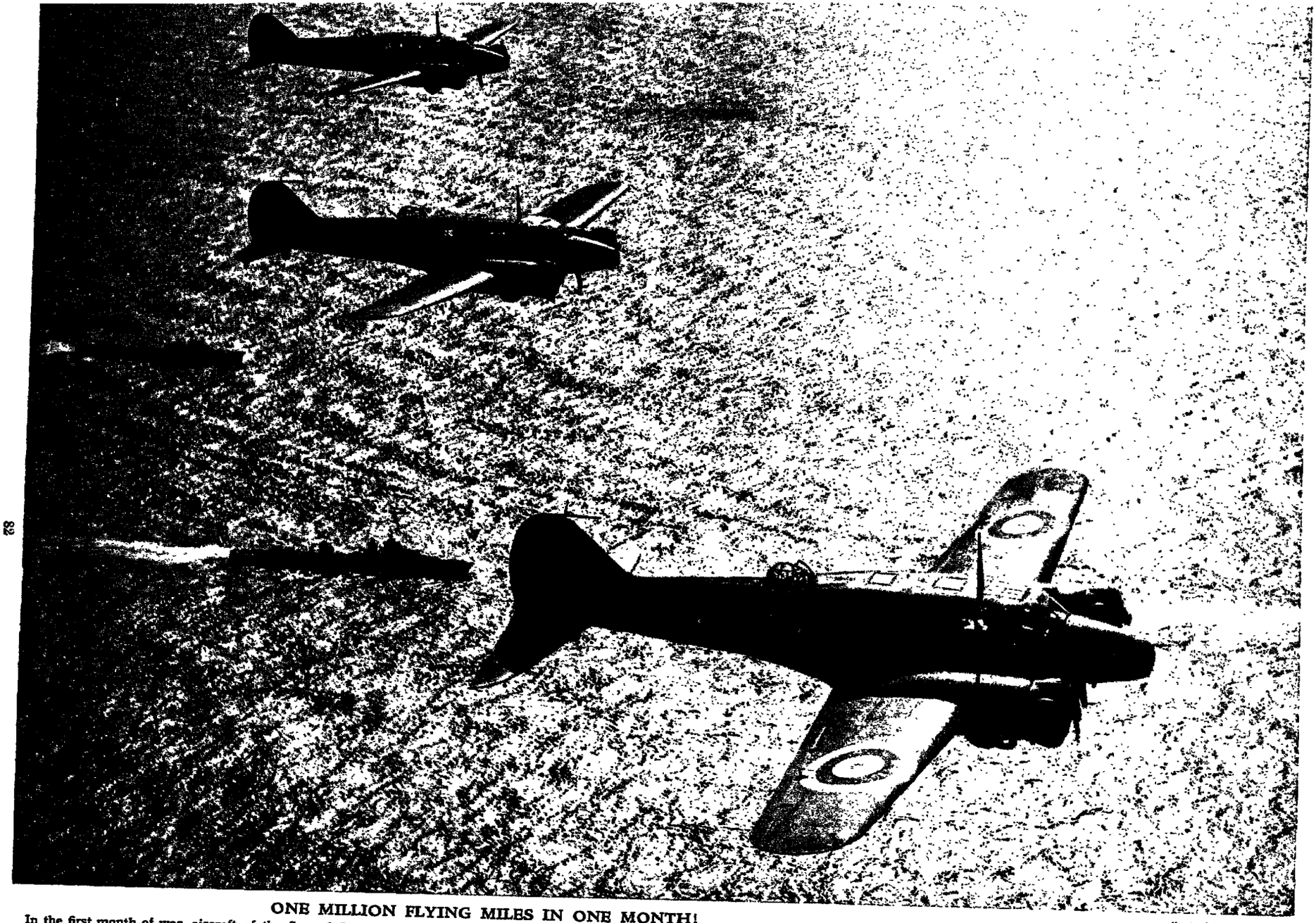
## 10,000 HORSE POWER IN A 'HURRICANE' SQUADRON

A Fighter Squadron of the R A F has a normal peacetime establishment of 12 aircraft These usually take the air in three flights of three machines the remaining three being in reserve Above is a squadron of Hurricane single seater fighters in their airpaint The top speed of the 'Hurricane which is driven by a Rolls Royce Merlin engine of over 1 000 h p is officially given as 335 m p h but there is little doubt that this figure can be exceeded Even this amazing performance is surpassed by some other types of British aircraft



## WHEN THE SILENT SERVICE' SPEAKS

The decisive weapon of the Royal Navy is the gun and this impressive photograph conveys vividly the sense of ruthless destruction which attends the firing of a salvo from the large guns of a battle cruiser A gunnery officer, high up in the ship, above the smoke is responsible for keeping the range finders and gun-layers in co-ordination The range records are transmitted mechanically to the fire control room down in the ship well behind the armour, where the officers and staff plot the course, speed and movement of their own and the enemy ship



## ONE MILLION FLYING MILES IN ONE MONTH!

In the first month of war, aircraft of the Coastal Command, R.A.F. flew over a million miles carrying out their vital task of patrolling the seas around our coasts. The main object of such patrols is the detecting and sinking of hostile submarines, but a watch must also be kept for enemy surface craft and aeroplanes, and Allied shipping and convoys must be protected. The photograph above shows a flight of Avro "Ansons" of a general reconnaissance squadron acting in conjunction with a destroyer patrol.

*Central News*

where this line would be drawn was given in the Moscow newspaper "Izvestia" on September 22. Beginning at Augustow on the East Prussian border, it ran through Bialystok, Brest-Litovsk, Luboml, and Lwow to the old Polish frontier with Ruthenia (since the collapse of Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1939, Hungarian territory) near Rafajlowa. This line was not very different from that Curzon Line suggested by the Allies in 1919 and called after Britain's Foreign Secretary at the time. In the course of a few days, however, it became apparent that the Russian troops had already passed the line at many points, particularly in the south, where the whole of Polish Ukraine, with its oilfields, was shortly in the occupation of the Soviet troops.

**The Race for the Carcass**

To the world at large there was presented the spectacle of two great armies pushing ahead as fast as their mechanized units could travel, hastening not so much to meet each other as to seize and occupy as much of Poland as they could before the other could stake out his claim. By September 22 the Germans had made contact with the Russians at Bialystok, Brest-Litovsk and Lwow—practically the whole of Poland was already in the occupation of one or the other of the partners in the act of invasion.

Following the seizure of all the important centres, Germany and Russia proceeded to divide the spoil; and so successful had the Red Army been in the race that the world was not surprised to learn that the lion's share was to go to Russia. On the night of September 22 a joint communiqué issued by the two governments read: "The Governments of Germany and the U.S.S.R. have established a demarcation line between the German and Soviet armies, which passes along the River Pissa up to its confluence with the River Narew, then along the Narew up to its confluence with the River Bug, then along the Bug up to its confluence with the River Vistula, then along the Vistula up to the mouth of the River San, and then along the San up to its source."

By this agreement Russia was to receive Brest-Litovsk, Lwow, Lublin, Bialystok, and Vilna; Germany for her part was to receive Gdynia, Lodz, Cracow, Katowice, and Poznan. Warsaw, the capital, was to be divided—the main city going to Germany and the suburb of Praga, on the opposite bank of the Vistula, to Russia. In size of territory Russia's share was far in excess of Germany's, while the population in the two areas was approximately the same. But this was not all. The disparity became still more marked when it was realized that while Germany was to receive the Silesian coalfields and the heavy industrial and armaments-producing area, she was relinquishing to Russia the Galician oilfields and the Polish Ukraine—in other words, the areas producing those raw materials of which she had most vital need. Still more significant was the abandonment by Germany of her much-advertised and long cherished road to the east through the Ukraine. By the agreement now drawn up between the two governments, Germany was barred from the Ukraine by a frontier of Soviet bayonets. This division of the conquered country must have been exceedingly galling to the Nazi High Command, for if it were to be implemented in full, the German troops would have to be withdrawn from territory beyond Warsaw which they had won by the sword. "Why should we give up to the Russians, who entered the war when the fighting was practically over, the vast areas whose conquest involved the loss of many thousands of German lives?" Such, we may well suppose, was the question that presented itself to the Nazi chiefs, and in the final apportionment of the spoil the fact that a much larger share went to Germany than in the first division is proof of the convincing arguments—arguments made weighty with armed men and masses of tanks and guns and aeroplanes—adduced by the German negotiators who agreed to the terms decided upon in Moscow on September 29.

For the second time in a week Poland was partitioned. Under the first div-



**NAZI MILITARY CHIEFS IN THE POLISH CAMPAIGN**

During the war of 1914-18 Germany had good reason to be thankful for the fruitful collaboration of *Hindenburg and his Chief of Staff, Ludendorff* The two men upon whose decisions now rests the destiny of the German army are seen above. On the right is General von Brauchitsch, German Commander-in-Chief, consulting over a war map with Artillery-General Helder, his Chief of Staff. *Planet News*



**VILNA IS RESTORED**

**On the right is a scene in the city of Vilna, seized by Poland in 1920, but regarded by the Lithuanians as their own capital. Below, Russian soldiers are seen advancing upon the city, occupied by the Soviet on September 19, 1939 It was restored to Lithuania by Russia on October 11, 1939**



Russia received much more than half of the conquest; under the second, a little less than half. The new line ran through Grodno and Brest-Litovsk to Przemysl, and then to the Ruthenian frontier at Lupkow. The chief difference between the two divisions was the award to Germany of a large area to the east of Warsaw; the oilfields of Galicia went, as before, mainly to Russia, and, more important yet, Russia still held the whole of Poland's frontier with Rumania and Ruthenia. Hitler, frustrated in his dearest purpose, watched the Red Army put a full stop to the *Drang nach Svd-Osten.*

Some agreement between the two powers was becoming a most urgent necessity, for the troops of the Soviet armies were not allowed to forget that they were propagandists as well as warriors. In those parts of the land which they had occupied they had already done much by way of Sovietization. Red propaganda, supported by the shooting of officers, officials, landlords and priests, had already worked a transformation in the Polish scene—and only a week had elapsed since the Soviet entered the war! In the circumstances the Nazis may well have congratulated themselves on having made a better bargain with Stalin than had seemed possible at first. So the two armies approached and at last met all along the line. On the German side, at least, the orders ran that there was to be no fraternization. Red-shirts and brown-shirts must not mix. . . .

And what of the Polish army and people as their enemies decided this fourth partition? The army had ceased to exist, at least as an army; only here and there guerilla bands kept up some show of resistance. The High Command was in flight, in Rumania; officers and men were in hiding or had thrown away their military badges or uniform and had dribbled back to their homes. As for the people, they watched the progress of the invaders with an amazed horror. As the German legions clattered by the peasants fled into their hovels, shuttered their windows and bolted the doors; or they stood on the footpath in stubborn bravery, making the sign of the cross or cursing the foe beneath their breath with the deepest, heaviest curses in their vocabulary.

But three weeks had elapsed since Poland, in a mood of resigned, if not cheerful, confidence, had gone out to meet the invader. Only three weeks had gone since the Warsaw crowds had acclaimed the representatives of Poland's Western allies who had honoured their word and had flung their swords beside Poland's in the scales of war. Then the nation believed in its leaders, its army, in itself.

**Poland's Débâcle**

And now? Its leaders were exiles; its army crushed and dispersed; the sacred soil was befouled by the invaders' tread. Only in Warsaw did the spirit of Poland still endure—and Warsaw, bombed and battered through twenty days, was now on the verge of surrender.



*Wide World*

**SHARING THE SPOILS**

**The demarcation of Poland under the partition which took place at the end of September, 1939, is clearly shown by the map in page 45. Above, German and Russian officers are seen at Bialystok discussing details relative to the partition. Bialystok, a large industrial centre, 45 miles S.W. of Grodno, had become part of Poland in 1919.**

## *Historic Documents. XVII-XXI*

# *PROTESTS AGAINST RUSSIAN AGGRESSION*

Following the Soviet Note and M. Molotov's broadcast (see page 75) which paved the way for the Soviet invasion of Poland, the Polish Embassy in London launched on September 17, 1939, a vigorous statement on such a violation of pacts between the two countries. This was the first of many protests issued by, or on behalf of, the tragic Polish Republic. A selection is given below.

STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE POLISH EMBASSY IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER 17, 1939:

ON September 17, at 4 a.m., Soviet troops crossed the frontier of Poland at many points and were met immediately with strong resistance on the part of the Polish National Army. A sharp encounter in particular is being fought near the frontier in the region of Molodeczno.

The pretext which the Soviet Government advance in order to justify this flagrant act of direct aggression is that the Polish Government has ceased to exist, and that it has abandoned the territory of Poland, thus leaving the Polish population on territories outside the zone of war with Germany without protection.

The Polish Government cannot enter into any discussion of the pretext which the Soviet Government has invented in order to justify the violation of the Polish frontier.

The Polish Government, responsible to the President of the Republic and to the duly elected National Parliament, is functioning on Polish territory and is carrying on the war against the German aggressors by all the means in its power.

By the act of direct aggression committed this morning the Soviet Government have flagrantly violated the Polish-Russian Pact of Non-Aggression concluded in Moscow on July 25, 1932, in which both parties mutually undertook to abstain from all aggressive action or from attack against each other. Moreover, on May 5, 1934, by the Protocol signed in Moscow, the above Pact of Non-Aggression was prolonged until December 31, 1945.

By the convention concluded in London on July 3, 1933, Soviet Russia and Poland agreed on a definition of aggression, which clearly stamped as an act of aggression any encroachment of the territory of one Contracting Party by the armed forces of the other, and furthermore that no consideration of a political, military, economic, or any other order, could in any circumstances serve as a pretext or excuse for committing an act of aggression.

Therefore, by the act of wanton aggression committed this morning, the Soviet Government stands self-condemned as a violator of its international obligations, thus contradicting all the moral principles upon which Soviet Russia pretended to base her foreign policy since her admittance into the League of Nations.

COMMUNIQUÉ SENT OUT BY THE POLISH GOVERNMENT AT KUTY, SEPTEMBER 18:

THE Polish Ambassador in Moscow declined to accept the Soviet Note sent to him yesterday. The Polish Government approved the action of its Ambassador, who asked for his passports.

The Polish Government protests strongly against the unilateral action of Russia in breaking her Non-Aggression Pact with Poland, and also against the invasion of Polish territory, which was undertaken when the whole Polish nation was struggling with all its might against the German aggressor.

The Polish Government parries the reasons given in the Soviet Note with the statement that the Polish Government is carrying out its duties normally and the Polish army is struggling with success against the enemy.

If the Soviet Government complains that it lacked contact with the Polish Government, the fault is its own, as the Soviet Ambassador left Poland while the whole of the remainder of the diplomatic corps maintained contact with the Polish Government without interruption.

DR. MOSCICKI, PRESIDENT OF THE POLISH REPUBLIC, IN A PROCLAMATION TO THE POLISH NATION, SEPTEMBER 18:

CITIZENS! at a time when our army, with incomparable courage, is struggling, from the first day of war, against the overwhelming power of the enemy, withstanding the onslaught of almost the whole of the armed might of Germany, our eastern neighbour has invaded our land in violation of solemn covenants and of the unchanging laws of morality.

Not for the first time in our history we are faced with an invasion inundating our country both from the west and the east.

Poland, allied to France and Great Britain, is struggling for the rule of law against lawlessness, for faith and civilization against soulless barbarism, against the reign of evil in the world.

From this struggle, I have the invincible faith, Poland must and shall emerge victorious.

Citizens! from the passing deluge we must safeguard the symbols of the Republic and the course of the constitutional authority.

Therefore, with a heavy heart, I have resolved to transfer the seat of the President of the Republic and of the highest executive authority of the State to a place offering conditions that assure to them full sovereignty and enable them to watch over the interests of the Republic.

Citizens! I am aware that throughout the hardest ordeals you will preserve the same strength of spirit, the same dignity and lofty pride by which you have earned the admiration of the world.

On every one of you today rests the duty of guarding the honour of the nation, no matter what may befall you.

Almighty Providence will render justice to our cause.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, SEPTEMBER 20:

ON September 17 an event occurred which has inevitably had a decisive effect upon the war on the Eastern Front. On the morning of September 17 Russian troops crossed the Polish frontier at points along its whole length and advanced into Poland. . . .

A Note was handed to the Polish Ambassador in Moscow to the effect that Warsaw as the capital of Poland no longer existed, that the Polish Government had disintegrated, and that the Polish State and its Government had ceased to exist. In the same way the agreements concluded between the Soviet Union and Poland had come to an end. Poland had become a suitable field for all manner of hazards and surprises which might constitute a threat to the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union could therefore no longer preserve a neutral attitude, and the Soviet Government had ordered their troops to cross the frontier and take under their protection the life and property of the population of the Western Ukraine and Western White Russia. . . .

The effects of the Russian invasion upon the hard-pressed Poles have naturally been very serious. Caught between two vast armies, and with their communications to the south cut off, the Polish forces are still continuing their courageous resistance. . . .

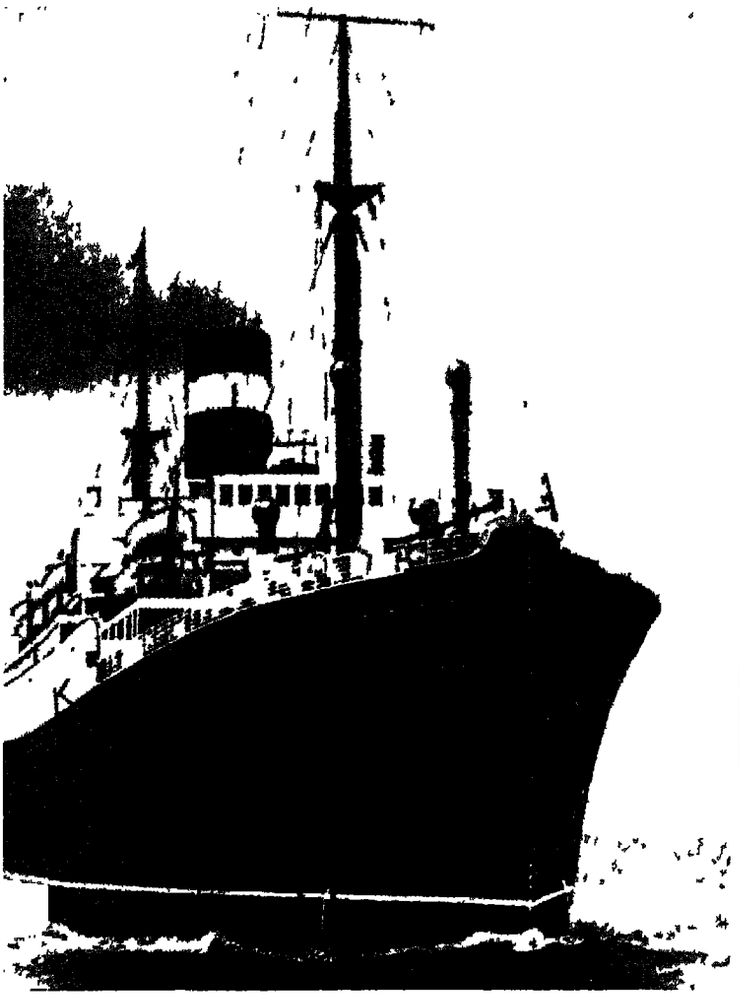
It is still too early to pronounce any final verdict on the motives or consequences of the Russian action.

For the unhappy victim of this cynical attack the result has been a tragedy of the grimmest character. The world which has watched the vain struggle of the Polish nation against overwhelming odds with profound pity and sympathy admires their valour, which even now refuses to admit defeat. If Britain and France have been unable to avert defeat of the armies of Poland, they have assured her that they have not forgotten their obligations to her, nor weakened in their determination to carry on the struggle. . . .

COUNT RACZYNSKI, POLISH AMBASSADOR, IN A NOTE TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, SEPTEMBER 30:

I RAISE in the name of the Polish Government the most formal and most solemn protest against the plot hatched between Berlin and Moscow in disregard of all international obligations and of all principles of morality.

Poland shall never recognize this act of violence, and, fortified by the justice of her case, she shall never cease to struggle until her territories have been liberated from the invaders and her legitimate rights fully established.







## NAZI U-BOAT'S CALLOUS CRIME

Within a few hours of the outbreak of war between Britain and Germany a German U-boat had claimed its first victim, a harmless passenger liner, the "Athenia," en route from Belfast to Montreal, with 1,104 persons on board, of whom over 300 were Americans. Top left is the ill-fated "Athenia," a Donaldson Atlantic Line vessel of 13,581 tons. Above, an injured survivor, clad in blankets, is being assisted ashore at Galway.

One hundred and twelve people remained unaccounted for after the disaster. The remainder were rescued by British destroyers, the Norwegian "Knute Nelson," the Swedish "Southern Cross," and the American "City of Flint." Above and right are two photographs, taken by a survivor on the "Knute Nelson," showing the last moments of the doomed "Athenia."

*Photos. Fox, Keystone; "Daily Telegraph"*

Chapter 10

# THE SEA AFFAIR: TACKLING THE U-BOATS

*Britain's Navy was Ready—U-Boats Posted Beforehand on Trade Routes—Attack on Neutral Shipping—German Ships Driven off the High Seas—Torpedoing of the 'Athenia'—Convoy System in Operation—Mastering the U-Boat Menace—Churchill's Justified Optimism—Murder on the High Seas: Examples of U-Boat Warfare*

THE outbreak of war found the British Navy as well prepared as, or better than, it had ever been in its history. Every ship was at its station and the auxiliaries and reserves were mobilized. At eleven o'clock on September 3, 1939, Britain had once more the virtual command of the seas.

German submarines, it is true, were at their appointed stations on the great trade routes, under orders which must have been issued at a time when Herr Hitler was still posing as the apostle of an immediate peace, upon his own terms. The door, he said, was still open to negotiation, but his submarines were lying in wait to destroy merchant shipping the moment that the British ultimatum expired.

**The 'Athenia' Atrocity**

Scarcely eight hours afterwards, at 7.45 p.m. on Sunday, September 3, the Donaldson Atlantic liner "Athenia" (13,581 tons), outward bound to Canada, was sunk without warning 250 miles west of Donegal. She had on board passengers and crew numbering 1,104 persons. Those who were not killed by the explosion took to the boats, and all but 112 were picked up by ships which had hurried to their assistance.

In the meantime German shipping which was on the high seas was escaping to German or neutral ports. A few days afterwards it was learned that 54 German merchant ships totalling 180,000 tons were sheltering in the Spanish port of Vigo, and that nine German ships totalling more than 60,000 tons were in Japanese ports. By a preconcerted wireless signal every German captain headed his ship, were it possible, for German waters, and if not, to the security of neutral harbours. This security was bought only at the price of internment during the period of the war.

So that within the space of a few hours it might truthfully be said that the high seas had been cleared of all merchant shipping belonging to Germany (estimated at 2,000,000 tons) which might in any way contribute to her supplies; and that stranded in an indefinite and disagreeable internment were many of her nationals who by reason of their expert seamanship might one day have been invaluable as naval reserves.

Although the grave danger persisted of attacks on French, British and neutral shipping by submarines and such armed raiders that the Germans might still have at large, the fact was that any hope of sea-borne trade was as effectively killed for the enemy in those first few hours of war as if every German ship had been sent to the bottom. There remained to such vessels only the use of their wireless in reporting the movements of allied shipping, and their possible value as feeding ships to any German submarines that might happen to venture into their hiding-places.

A considerable amount of German shipping and of contraband goods destined for Germany fell into British hands during the first weeks of the war. There were several instances in which the Germans scuttled their ship and took to the boats rather than let ship and cargo be captured. For example, a Norddeutscher-Lloyd steamer, the German vessel "Inn" of 2,867 tons, captured on Tuesday, September 5, had been brought by its captain to a sinking condition before she could be boarded and 35 passengers and crew taken off. There is a touch of Captain Marryat, the novelist, in the official announcement that the rescue included "one lady and two cages of rare birds."



**BACK AT HIS OLD JOB**

**At the outbreak of war Mr. Winston Churchill (above) took up again the office of First Lord of the Admiralty which he had so successfully held at the beginning of the war of 1914–18.**

*Photo, P.N.A.*

During the war of 1914–1918 the U-boat attacks on British shipping grew to an intensity which at one time seriously menaced Great Britain's food supplies, and it was not till the later stages of the sea campaign that this menace was satisfactorily checked. At the outbreak of the present war the Navy was far better prepared to deal with submarines, was well supplied with "hunting forces," and was ready to put into operation the effective convoy system.

**'Ready, Aye Ready'**

At the end of the fourth week the First Lord announced a highly satisfactory state of affairs. The high proportion of losses in the first week was due to the element of surprise. The British mercantile marine (there are on the average 2,000 British ships at sea in any given week) were on their lawful occasions in all parts of the world. These ships were the immediate prey of U-boats carefully posted beforehand. Outgoing ships could at once be provided with convoys, but this was not possible immediately for those homeward bound. Large numbers of ships were therefore forced to take the risk of U-boat attack, with no escort and no defensive armament.

One of the first sufferers was the ill-fated "Athenia." Without warning of any kind, the German torpedo struck the ship abaft the engine-room on the port side, when she was 250 miles from the coast of Ireland. In a statement in the House of Commons, Mr. Churchill said that soon after the torpedo hit the vessel the submarine came to the surface and fired a shell which exploded on the middle deck. The submarine cruised round the sinking ship and was seen by numerous persons, including American survivors who swore affidavits to that effect.

In view of the fantastic repudiation of the crime made over the German wireless, in which it was stated that Mr. Churchill had ordered the destruction of the ship to inflame American opinion against Germany, it was very necessary that such evidence should be marshalled. Another German invention was that the "Athenia" had struck a British mine. This was quickly disposed of by the categorical statement that there were no British mines in the neighbourhood at the time. But the Germans went on inventing fresh stories.

There cannot remain a vestige of doubt that the "Athenia" was torpedoed, and that the torpedo was fired by a German submarine. For this we have the evidence of the captain of the ship who said: "The passengers were at dinner about 7.30 p.m. when the torpedo struck the ship and killed several of them. The torpedo went right through the ship to the engine room. It completely wrecked the galley." Afterwards the submarine rose to the surface and fired a shell which was aimed at the destruction of the wireless equipment but missed. Other responsible members of the crew, and passengers also testified to having seen the submarine and the wide wake of the torpedo. It was indeed merciful that the German gunner missed his mark of the "Athenia's" wireless, for she was able to summon help rapidly. Three British destroyers, the Norwegian steamer "Knute Nelson" and a yacht, the "Southern Cross," were soon on the scene, but not before the survivors had experienced great suffering. Many were wounded; others had had a long immersion, and when rescued were without clothes.

The "Knute Nelson" landed 430 survivors next day in Galway; the "Southern Cross" had rescued 200 unfortunates; other ships landed 400 survivors on the Clydeside. Of the complement of 1,400 passengers, officers and crew, 112 were finally posted as "missing." Amongst the passengers included in this number were 50 British subjects, 30 from the United States, seven Poles and four Germans. Nineteen members of the crew were also missing.

In subscribing to the London Naval Treaty of 1930, Germany had agreed that, except in cases of refusal to stop or of active resistance to visit or search, a submarine should not sink a merchant ship without having placed passengers, crew and ship's papers in a place of safety. To leave human beings abandoned in ship's boats 200 or more miles from land is not, as Mr. Churchill said, to leave them in a place of safety. Therefore in the grossest manner the German Navy had started the war with a flagrant and inhuman act of piracy. The "Athenia" was never challenged; no request was made to search her; she had no armaments with which to resist. She had no cargo of munitions; 75 per cent of her passengers were women and children, for the most part helpless refugees from German tyranny.

U-boat sinkings during the first week of the war were 65,000 tons, a highly formidable figure. In the second week they were 46,000 tons, in the third they had dropped to 21,000 tons. On September 28 Mr. Churchill made his reassuring statement to the House of Commons.

After announcing that the convoy system was in full operation he stated that a second reply to the U-boat attack would be to arm all merchant vessels and fast liners with defensive armaments both against U-boat and the aeroplane. In a short time, he said, the immense Mercantile Marine of the British Empire would be armed. All the guns and equipment necessary for this vast operation were ready at the various arming stations, together with a proportion of trained gunners to man them and train the ordinary seamen. In passing he paid tribute to his predecessors in office who had provided so well for this contingency.

**First Lord's Stirring Story**

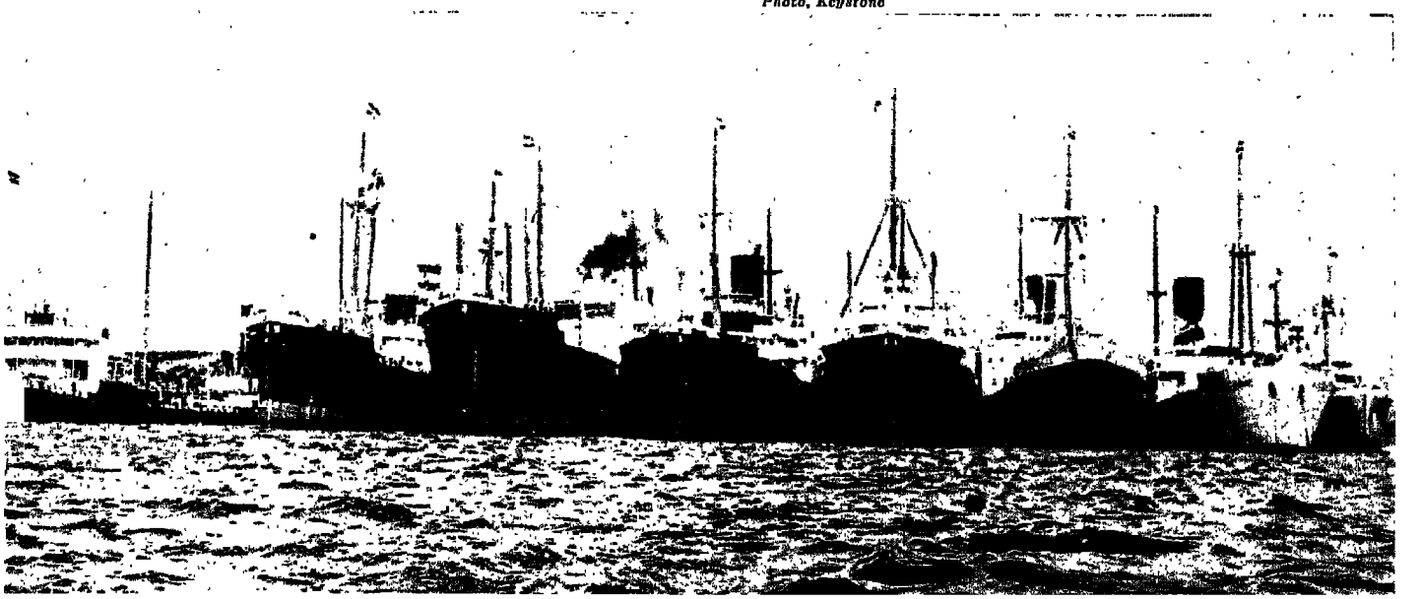
Mr. Churchill then went on to say that the British attack on the U-boats was being delivered with the utmost vigour and intensity, and stressed the far greater advantages which Britain possessed as compared with 25 years ago, when there were occasions when the U-boat problem had seemed well-nigh insoluble. The First Lord, from his knowledge of circumstances as they were in 1914 and the succeeding years, recalled the fact that in those days it was often necessary to hunt down a U-boat with a flotilla of 15 to 20 vessels working for a whole day on the vaguest indications. Under modern conditions it was possible for two destroyers or even one to maintain a prolonged and relentless pursuit.

The First Lord made it clear that during the first weeks of the war a very large number of attacks had been made by British flotillas, and that the attacks on U-boats had been five or six times more numerous than in any equal period of the late war—"in which," he added, "after all, they did not beat us." He suggested that the Prime Minister's estimate of six or seven U-boats sunk in these first weeks might well be subject to additions.

### BOTTLED UP IN PORT

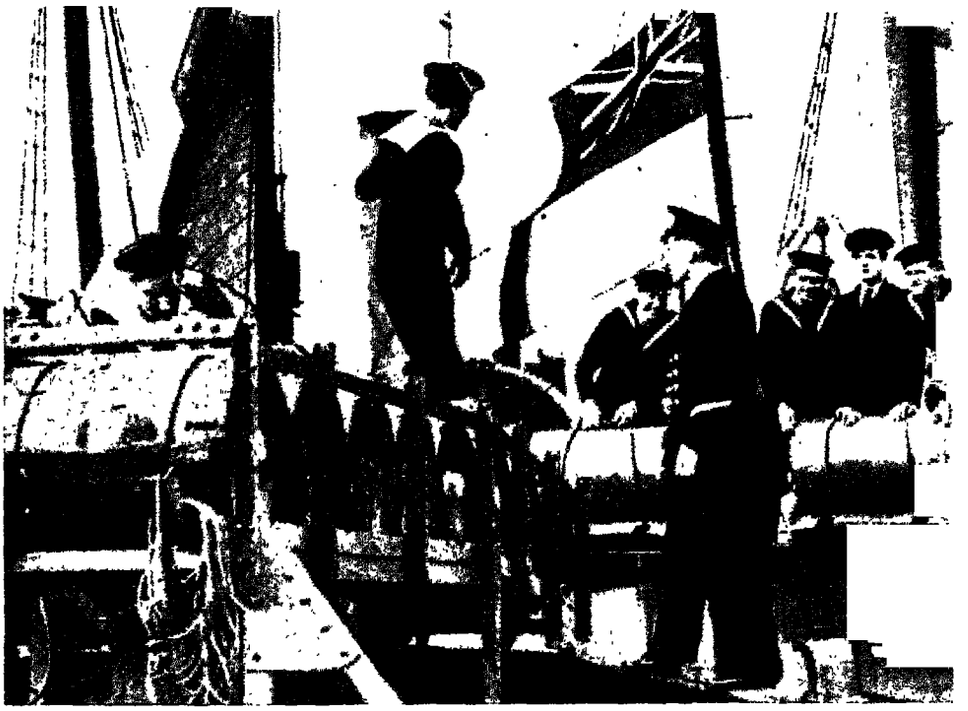
**Faced with the hard fact of the Allied command of the seas, these German merchant ships sought safety in the neutral port of Curacao, in the Dutch West Indies. Though Germany needed raw materials, her merchant shipping was everywhere forced off the seas.**

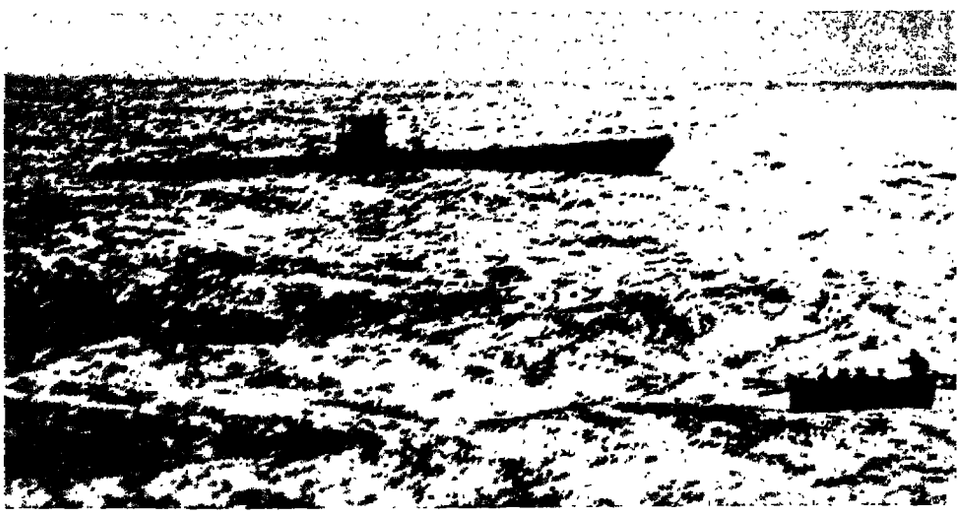
*Photo, Keystone*



Mr. Churchill, with the caution implicit in his high office and taking the six or seven U-boats mentioned by the Prime Minister as a basis, stated that Germany had in all probability lost 10 per cent. of her total strength; and suggested that these losses were probably one quarter or perhaps even one third of the U-boats which had been employed actively. He added: "All these vessels, those that have been sunk and those that have escaped, have subjected themselves to what is said to be the most trying ordeal which men can undergo in wartime. A large proportion never return home, and those who do have grim tales to tell."

It is interesting at this point to follow the adventures of one or two ships which were the subject of U-boat attack during these early days. On September 6 the "Royal Sceptre," 4,853 tons, was sunk in a position about 300 miles to the westward of Ushant. The crew of this ship were cast adrift in their boats—and the submarine commander must have realized how slender was their chance of reaching land. In Britain the unfortunate officers and crew were given up as lost. Then, after three weeks, it was learnt that they had been picked up near Madeira by the British freighter "Browning"; for fear of giving away her own position to enemy under-water craft, the "Browning" had kept silence until her arrival at the Brazilian port of Bahia (São Salvador), on September 26, when at last she was able to tell the glad news of the rescue. It appeared that the "Browning" had been stopped by the same U-boat that had sunk the "Royal Sceptre," and told to search for the latter's boats. The master of







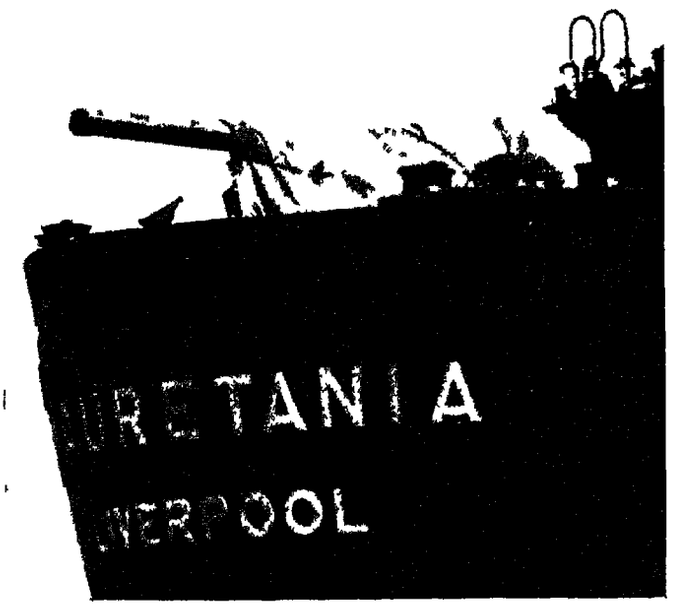
**RAIDER AND CHASERS**

**Immediately above is a photograph, taken from the American freighter "Wacosta," of a U-boat which stopped and searched her. Enemy submarines when encountered, are attacked with depth charges; these are seen, top, being made fast by English and French sailors. Left, an exploding depth charge throws up a mountain of water.**

*Photos, P.N.A.; Keystone*

the "Royal Sceptre" had been killed, and the second officer and eight of the crew wounded, by the U-boat's gunfire when abandoning ship. The injured men were landed at Bahia.

On the morning of September 11, the 9,456-ton motor vessel "Inverliffey," flying the flag of the Irish Free State and registered in Dublin, was in a position about 270 miles south-west of Land's End, steering for the entrance of the English Channel. The weather was misty, and shortly after noon the ship was running through patches of real fog.




**PASSENGERS' PROTECTION**

**After the "Athenia" outrage it was obvious that Germany would not hesitate to sink passenger ships, and these vessels were provided with weapons of protection. On the left is seen a 6-in. anti-submarine gun on the after-deck of the new "Mauretania."**

*Photo, Planet News*

A sharp look-out was being kept for submarines.

At about 1.15 p.m. those on the "Inverliffey's" bridge sighted an American tanker, the "R. G. Stewart," lying apparently stopped and headed in a north-easterly direction. At much the same moment the fog lifted and the "Inverliffey's" officers sighted a submarine about half a mile distant on the port beam.

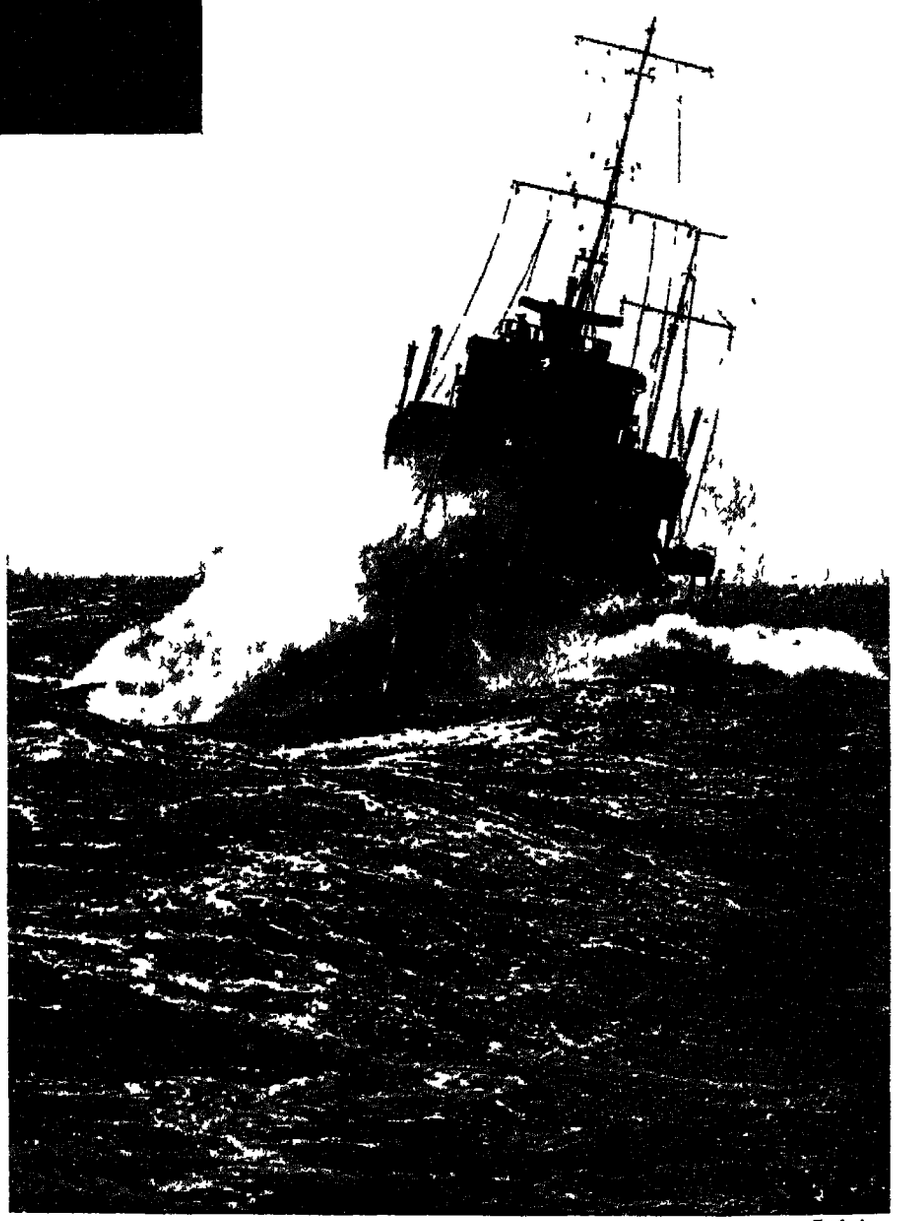
The submarine immediately opened fire, whereupon the "Inverliffey's" master turned stern-on to the U-boat and rang down to his engine-room for all possible speed. The submarine continued to fire, discharging in all seven rounds. The "Inverliffey" had no alternative but to stop, and the U-boat hoisted a signal for the master to go on board with his papers. A boat was lowered, and the master obeyed, to be asked by the submarine's commander where he was bound. The answer was that the steamer was ordered to contact with Land's End for wireless orders.

The U-boat commander replied that the "Inverliffey" carried a contraband cargo, and that he intended to sink her. The master protested, pointing out that his ship flew the flag of the Irish Free State and was registered in Dublin. The German officer took no notice of the protest.

The "Inverliffey's" crew of 40 were ordered to abandon ship in their boats. When they had got clear, the submarine fired a torpedo, which struck the merchantman amidships on the starboard side. Within a few seconds the ship was fiercely ablaze.

The submarine commander took the master and the boat's crew to the American tanker, "R. G. Stewart," near by, which then proceeded to pick up the occupants of the two other lifeboats. The "R. G. Stewart" was outward-bound across the Atlantic to the Dutch West Indies, so the master got into touch with a steamer bound for Havre. By 8.30 that same evening the "Inverliffey's" officers and men were safely transferred, and on their way to France, where they landed on September 14

A third example of U-boat warfare at this time may be quoted because it revealed the fact that a brave and resourceful captain, backed up by efficient officers and crew, might still outdistance and elude the unwelcome



*Topical*

**U-BOATS' DEADLY ENEMY**

**In time of war the convoying of merchant shipping is an unending and vital task of the Navy, and becomes one of the most important duties of the destroyer, a duty for which she is particularly fitted by reason of her speed and deadly armament of torpedoes and depth charges. Destroyers similar to the one seen above have put a sudden end to the career of many a U-boat.**

attentions of a German submarine. The ship in question was a homeward-bound liner and the U-boat was sighted coming to the surface some 4,000 yards away. The alarm was given; two shots were fired by the U-boat, one of which landed within 100 yards of the liner.

The captain altered course to bring the submarine well on the quarter and did what he could to foil the attacker. Ordering his men to take cover and keeping his ship into the wind, which was from the north-north-west, he compelled the U-boat to give chase, and managed to draw ahead, increasing the range to about 6,000 yards or three miles.

The steamer's nominal speed was a fraction over 13 knots, but thanks to arrangements made beforehand, and the efforts of officers and men of the engineers' department, she was soon travelling at 15 knots. For some time the U-boat still managed to gain on her quarry. By three o'clock the steamer was going at a speed estimated at 16½ knots. She started to draw ahead, and at 4.10 p.m. the submarine, then about four miles astern, gave up the chase and disappeared.

This valuable vessel with hundreds of souls aboard was saved by the stout courage and presence of mind of her

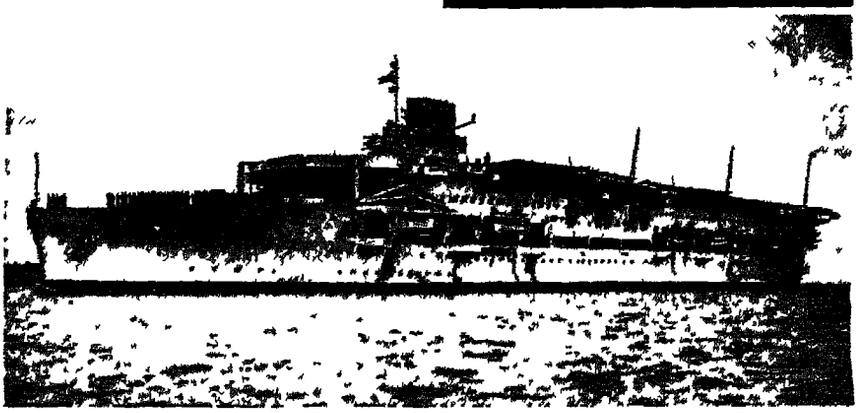


captain, officers and crew, and notably by the devotion to duty and persistence of those in her engine-room and stoke-hold. It was a remarkable achievement to drive such a vessel at three knots more than her rated speed.

In numerous instances the U-boat commanders are known to have behaved with humanity; in others, with a ruthlessness barely credible in those who follow the profession of the sea. Beside the barbarous treatment meted out to the hapless crew of the "Royal Sceptre" must be placed the attack on the merchant ship "Hazelside," which occurred later in the month. Twelve of the crew were killed by surprise gunfire, and the gallant captain died going down with his ship.

The Royal Navy suffered one, but only one, serious loss in the first three weeks of the war. This was the sinking by submarine attack of the aircraft carrier H.M.S. "Courageous." She was originally a cruiser and had been converted into an aircraft carrier at a cost of £2,025,800. She had 16 4·7-inch guns, four three-pounder and 17 smaller guns. She had been commissioned with the Reserve Fleet in August, her task at





**'TOLL FOR THE BRAVE'**

**On the night of September 17, 1939, the aircraft carrier "Courageous" was sunk by an enemy submarine, with the loss of over 500 members of her crew. The ill-fated ship is seen above, and top right is her commander, Captain W. T. Makeig-Jones, who went down with her; when last seen he was saluting the White Ensign. Left, is a survivor from the "Courageous" happily reunited with his family on arrival at a home port.**

*Photos, Wide World*

the outbreak of war being to protect merchant shipping from U-boat attack.

On September 17 "Courageous" left Devonport on offensive patrol protected by four destroyers. During this period, when the Admiralty had not yet completed their defensive measures against submarine warfare, it had been decided, Mr. Churchill later explained, to use aircraft carriers with some freedom in order to bring in the unarmed, unorganized and unconvoyed traffic then approaching home ports in large numbers.

On the evening of Sept. 18 two of the destroyers protecting "Courageous" had to leave her to go and hunt a U-boat which was attacking a merchant ship. At dusk, when "Courageous" turned into the wind in order to let her own aircraft land on her landing deck, she met, by a hundred to one chance, as the First Lord said, a German submarine on her unpredictable course.

The weather was good, with a moderate sea. The aircraft carrier had no warning of the attack. The submarine scored her hit amidships on the port side before the presence of the submarine had been detected. The survivors all testified to the fact that the ship reeled under two terrific explosions, and within four or five minutes the Captain's order was rapidly passed round by word of mouth, "Abandon ship."

Those who were able jumped into the sea and swam for it. Many, however, were trapped below. Owing to the list of the ship others, who had run to the starboard side, were unable to jump into the sea. Those boats which were launched were quickly swamped. Rafts were released which, with a great deal of floating timber, gave assistance

to those swimming in the sea. The destroyers and other ships in the vicinity quickly came to the rescue, and altogether 687 lives out of a full complement of just over 1,200 were saved.

The stories told by survivors are stirring indeed. A sergeant of the Royal Marines swam from one group to another urging them to keep their heads and their spirits up. Songs were started, "Rolling Home," "Show Me the Way to Go Home," with shouts of "Are We Downhearted? No!" The destroyers were so manoeuvred that their swell helped those in the water to swim towards them.

gave many evidences of their value in sea warfare both in attack and defence. The first active operation was the attack on September 4 on the German naval bases of Wilhelmshaven and Brunsbüttel (see page 69).

Apart from such spirited sallies, the air arm immediately began to do invaluable work in observing and attacking U-boats. The great speed of the reconnaissance flying-boats and land 'planes, and their ability quickly to reach a spot where a submarine had been seen breaking surface, greatly added to the difficulties of a submarine commander. A direct hit from a bomb



LANDING A SURVIVOR

On September 26, 1939, when all hope for them was almost abandoned, the 32 survivors of the sunk British freighter "Royal Sceptre" were landed by the British ship "Browning" at Bahia (São Salvador), Brazil. Above, James Twoway, injured steward of the "Royal Sceptre," is being carried from the "Browning."

*Photo, Associated Press*

The Admiralty announcement of the disaster expressed the belief that the submarine responsible was immediately sunk. This belief was fully shared by many survivors who testified to having seen her end. The Germans contented themselves with the bare statement that the submarine commander had returned to harbour to report his glorious victory.

The heroic captain of the "Courageous," Captain Makeig-Jones, was last seen on the bridge with his hand at the salute. His last recorded words were "What a damned fine shot!" In that tribute with his dying breath to a successful enemy, this gallant officer enrolled himself in that select company who have gained immortality by a single phrase.

During these early weeks the air arm of the Navy and the Royal Air Force put his craft out of action, and a bomb which dropped anywhere near certainly damaged and might well sink her.

The first graphic eye-witness account of the bombing and sinking of a German submarine came from a young South African officer serving with the R.A.F. He reported that when on submarine patrol he sighted a U-boat on the surface two miles away. It was travelling about 12 knots. On overhauling it, he dropped his first salvo of bombs at 500 feet. The submarine had started to dive, but the explosion of the bombs blew her back to the surface.

The nearest bomb of the second salvo landed six feet to the side of the conning tower. It was a direct hit on the submarine port side. There was a colossal explosion and her whole stern lifted out of the water. She dived into the sea at an angle of 30 degrees.

"For twenty minutes afterwards," said the officer, "I remained over the spot watching the large whirlpools caused by escaping air coming to the surface of the water. By that time I assumed the submarine to be out of action on the bottom of the sea and returned to my base."

These early offensive patrols of British seaplanes and aeroplanes did not in fact excite much retaliation by German aircraft, and, as will be seen in another chapter, the first German attempts to bomb units of the British fleet were supremely unsuccessful. On Sept. 18 the R.A.F. proved its usefulness in a new field.

The merchant vessel "Kensington Court" (4,863 tons), bound from the Argentine to Birkenhead, was attacked by a submarine without warning. After wirelessing his S O S the captain ordered the crew to the boats. One boat was lost; two others started rowing away and soon sighted a 'plane and shortly afterwards another. The crews started to cheer,

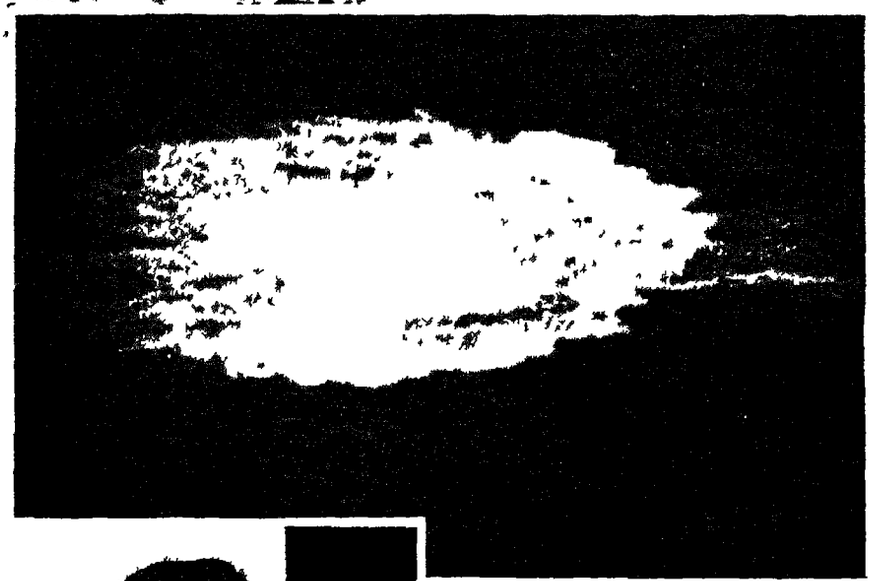
**Seaplanes to the Rescue**

but little thought that their rescue was at hand. One of the seaplanes taxied on to the sea and signalled the boats. The other landed and a third appeared. Between them, with the aid of collapsible boats, two or three men at a time were ferried over to the seaplanes until both crews, amounting to 34 men, were rescued and flown to safety. The seaplanes had picked up the captain's S O S whilst patrolling independently, and the pilot of one of them, commenting on this magnificent example of a new method of saving life at sea, is reported to have said: "It was not very difficult." But as Captain Schofield of the "Kensington Court" added: "It was not difficult, because they were efficient. If all the officers and men of the R.A.F. are like these young fellows who rescued us, then England has nothing to fear."

Certainly the first weeks of the war left Britain in a most justified mood of optimism with regard to the conduct of the war at sea. The First Lord of the Admiralty was able to state that the whole vast business of Britain's world-wide trade continued without appreciable diminution. The convoys of British troops, using devious routes, had reached and were reaching their destination abroad without casualty or interruption. The system of contraband control had even at this date (during the first fortnight) resulted in the seizure and conversion to British use of 67,000 more tons of German merchandise than had been sunk in British ships. During that first fortnight there were lost in British tankers 60,000 tons of oil, but we had gained from the enemy







**SUCCOURED BY SEAPLANES**

**On September 18, 1939, the S.S. "Kensington Court" was sunk by a U-boat when nearing the English coast. Her crew of 34, in the ship's boats, were sighted by two R.A.F. seaplanes and rescued. Above, seaplane hovering over the sinking vessel; right, the circle of foam which marked the last of the "Kensington Court"; below, the ship's captain with his rescuers.**

*Photos, P.N.A.; Planet News*

50,000 tons, apart from enormous additional stores brought in in the ordinary way.

In this first statement at length before the House Mr. Churchill made also the reassuring statement that Britain had, in fact, *got more* supplies in the country than she would have possessed had no war been declared and no U-boats gone into action.

The first three weeks were characterized also by violent attacks on neutral shipping which might be supposed to be engaged in trade with British ports. Indeed, as the submarine campaign progressed and losses of U-boats became more pronounced, so the attacks on defenceless neutrals became more marked and those on the heavily defended and convoyed British ships less and less.

Undoubtedly the U-boat campaign early suffered a severe reverse. The Admiralty might know or virtually assume the fate of many of these craft, but their fate was left in deliberate obscurity for several reasons. It was important that the Germans should not know of the fate of a particular sub-



marine, so that no replacement should take place in particular waters. It was important that those ashore should be kept in suspense, so that the long waiting for the submarine's return should be one of deepening anxiety developing towards the sickening certainty of her loss. Nothing could be more depressing to those submarine crews waiting to leave harbour than this period of uncertainty darkening to despair.

And apart from the loss of the boats themselves there was the far more serious loss of the personnel—of the highly trained captains, so difficult of replacement, and of the crews, inured to all the hardships of the service. A division of infantry may be destroyed on the battlefield and speedily replaced. The destruction of a submarine means an almost irreparable loss in skill, [illegible]ence, bravery and endurance

## *Historic Documents. XXII*

# *THE FIRST LORD ON THE U-BOAT WAR*

On September 26, 1939, Mr. Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, described in the House of Commons the methods by which Great Britain was winning the U-boat war We give below the greater part of his enheartening speech.

THE war at sea opened with some intensity. All our ships were going about the world in the ordinary way when they were set upon by lurking U-boats, carefully posted beforehand In the first week our losses in tonnage were half the weekly losses of the month of April, 1917, which was the peak year of the U-boat attack in the late war. That was a very serious proportion.

We immediately replied in three ways. First, we set in motion the convoy system. This could be very quickly done for all the outgoing ships, but it took a fortnight to organize from the other end a convoy of homeward-bound ships. This convoy system is now in full operation both ways.

Meanwhile, however, we had a large number of ships which had started independently under ordinary conditions of peace and which day after day had to run the gauntlet of the U-boats without being armed or escorted. In consequence a serious but I am glad to say a diminishing, toll was exacted.

The convoy system is a good and well-tried defence against U-boat attack but no one can pretend that it is a complete defence. Some degree of risk and a steady proportion of losses must be expected. There are also other forms of attack besides U-boats—attack by surface craft and attack from the air—against which we must be upon our guard. . . .

Our second reply to the U-boat attack is to arm all our merchant vessels and fast liners with defensive armament, both against the U-boat and against the aeroplane. For a fortnight past armed ships have been continually leaving the harbours of this island in large numbers. Some go in convoy some go independently. This applies not only to the United Kingdom but to our ports all over the world. Thus in a short time the immense mercantile marine of the British Empire will be armed. As we usually have 2,000 ships on salt water every day, this is a considerable proportion. . . .

Our third reply is, of course the British attack upon the U-boat. This is being delivered with the utmost vigour and intensity. . . . A large number of attacks have been made by our flotillas and hunting craft. There are, of course, many false alarms, some of them of a comical character. but it is no exaggeration to say that attacks upon German U-boats have been five or six times as numerous as in any equal period in the Great War when, after all, they did not beat us.

### Campaign Against U-Boats 'Just Beginning'

THE Prime Minister mentioned last week the figure of six or seven U-boats destroyed. That was, as he said, probably an underestimate, and since then we have had some fruitful and hopeful days. But even taking six or seven as a safe figure, that is one-tenth of the total enemy submarine fleet destroyed during the first fortnight of the war, and it is probably a quarter or perhaps even a third of all U-boats which are being actively employed. All these vessels, those sunk and those which have escaped, have subjected themselves to what is said to be the most trying ordeal any man can undergo in wartime. A large proportion never return home, and those who do have grim tales to tell.

The British attack upon the U-boats is only just beginning. Our hunting forces are getting stronger every day. By the end of October we expect to have three times the hunting forces which operated at the outbreak of war, while at the same time the number of targets open to U-boats upon the vast expanse of the seas and oceans will be greatly reduced by the use of convoys and the U-boats' means of attacking them heavily clogged and fettered.

In all this very keen and stern warfare the Royal Air Force and Fleet Air Arm have played an important part, both in directing the hunting destroyers upon their quarry and in actually attacking it themselves.

It was to bridge the gap between what we had ready at the beginning and what we have ready now that the Admiralty decided to use the aircraft carriers with some freedom in order to bring in the unarmed, unorganized, unconvoyed traffic which was then approaching our shores in large numbers.

Risks have to be run all the time in naval war, and sometimes grievous forfeit is exacted. The "Courageous" was attended by four destroyers, but two had to go to hunt a U-boat attacking a merchant ship, and when "Courageous" turned into wind at dusk in order to enable her own aircraft to alight upon her landing-deck, she happened, upon a hundred-to-one chance, to meet a U-boat in her unpredictable course.

But this hard stroke in war in no way diminishes our confidence in the methods now at our disposal. On the contrary, our confidence in them has grown with every day they have been employed, and their potency will become the more apparent in proportion as the great numbers of our new vessels come into action and as our hunting officers get the knack of using depth charges by frequent practice. . . .

In the first week our losses by U-boat sinkings amounted to 65,000 tons, in the second to 46,000 tons, and in the third to 21,000 tons. In the last six days we have lost 9,000 tons. . . .

### Cargoes Intercepted Greater Than Those Lost

MEANWHILE the whole vast business of our world-wide trade continues without appreciable diminution or interruption. Great convoys of troops are escorted to their various destinations. The enemy ships and commerce have been swept from the seas. Over 2,000,000 tons of German shipping is sheltering in German or interned in neutral harbours. Our system of contraband control is being perfected, and so far as the first fortnight of the war is concerned we have actually arrested, seized, and converted to our own use 67,000 tons more German merchandise than have been sunk in ships of our own. Even in oil, where we were unlucky in losing some tankers, we have lost 60,000 tons in the first fortnight and have gained 50,000 tons from the enemy, apart from the enormous additional stores we have brought safely in in the ordinary way. Again I reiterate my caution against over-sanguine deductions.

We have, however. in fact got more supplies in this war this afternoon than we should have had if no war had been declared and if no U-boats had come into action. I am not going beyond the limits of prudent statement when I say that at any rate it will take a long time to starve us out.

Now I must speak about the character of this warfare. From time to time the German U-boat commanders have tried their best to behave with humanity. We have seen them give good warning and also endeavour to help the crews to find their way to port. One German captain signalled to me personally the position in which the British ship was sunk, and urged that rescue should be sent. . . .

But many cruel and ruthless acts have been done. There was the "Athenia"; then later there was the "Royal Sceptre," whose crew of 32 were left in open boats hundreds of miles from land. There was the "Hazelside," twelve of whose sailors were killed by surprise gunfire in an ordinary ship, whose captain died in so gallant a fashion, going down with his vessel. We cannot at all recognize this type of warfare as other than contrary to all the long-accepted traditions of the sea, and to the laws of war to which the Germans have in recent years so lustily subscribed. . . .

IN all the far-reaching control that we ourselves are exercising upon the movements of contraband, no neutral ship has ever been put in danger, and no law recognized among civilized nations has been contravened. Even when German ships have deliberately sunk themselves to avoid the formalities of the Prize Court, we have so far succeeded in rescuing their crews.

Such is the U-boat war—hard, widespread, and bitter—a war of groping and drowning, a war of ambuscade and stratagem, a war of science and seamanship. All the more we respect the resolute spirit of the officers and men of the mercantile marine who put to sea with alacrity, sure that they are discharging a duty indispensable to the life of their island home. . . .

## *Historic Documents. XXIII*

# *MR. CHURCHILL ON THE FIRST MONTH OF WAR*

Five days after his speech in Parliament, reproduced in page 94, the First Lord of the Admiralty administered on October 1, 1939, another tonic to the nation in the shape of a broadcast review of Great Britain's position after four weeks of war.

THE British Empire and the French Republic have been at war with Nazi Germany for a month tonight. We have not yet come at all to the severity of fighting which is to be expected: but three important things have happened.

First, Poland has been again overrun by two of the great Powers which held her in bondage for 150 years, but were unable to quench the spirit of the Polish nation. The heroic defence of Warsaw shows that the soul of Poland is indestructible, and that she will rise again like a rock, which may for a spell be submerged by a tidal wave, but which remains a rock.

What is the second event of this first month? It is, of course, the assertion of the power of Russia. Russia has pursued a cold policy of self-interest. We could have wished that the Russian armies should be standing on their present line as the friends and allies of Poland, instead of as invaders. But that the Russian armies should stand on this line was clearly necessary for the safety of Russia against the Nazi menace.

AT any rate, the line is there and an Eastern Front has been created which Nazi Germany does not dare assail. When Herr von Ribbentrop was summoned to Moscow last week it was to learn the fact, and to accept the fact, that the Nazi designs upon the Baltic States and upon the Ukraine must come to a dead stop.

I cannot forecast to you the action of Russia. It is a riddle wrapped in mystery inside an enigma; but perhaps there is a key. That key is Russian national interest. It cannot be in accordance with the interest or safety of Russia that Nazi Germany should plant itself upon the shores of the Black Sea or that it should overrun the Balkan States and subjugate the Slavonic peoples of South-Eastern Europe. That would be contrary to the historic life-interests of Russia.

But here these interests of Russia fall into the same channel as the interests of Britain and France. None of these three Powers can afford to see Rumania, Yugo-Slavia, Bulgaria, and, above all, Turkey, put under the German heel. Through the fog of confusion and uncertainty we may discern quite plainly the community of interests which exists between England, France and Russia to prevent the Nazis carrying the flames of war into the Balkans and Turkey.

Thus (at some risk of being proved wrong by events), I will proclaim tonight my conviction that the second great fact of the first month of the war is that Hitler and all that Hitler stands for have been and are being warned off the East and the South-East of Europe.

### British Success Against U-Boats

WHAT is the third event? Here I speak, as First Lord of the Admiralty, with especial caution. It would seem that the U-boat attack upon the life of the British Isles has not so far proved successful. It is true that when they sprang out upon us and we were going about our ordinary business, with two thousand ships in constant movement every day upon the seas, they managed to do some serious damage.

But the Royal Navy has immediately attacked the U-boats, and is hunting them night and day—I will not say without mercy—because God forbid we should ever part company with that; but at any rate with zeal, and not altogether without relish.

And it looks tonight very much as if it is the U-boats who are feeling the weather and not the Royal Navy or the world-wide commerce of Britain.

[Here Mr. Churchill repeated some of the striking facts and figures set out in page 94.]

We must, of course, expect that the U-boat attack on the sea-borne commerce of the world will be renewed presently on a greater scale. We hope, however, that by the end of October we shall have three times as many hunting craft at work as we had at the beginning of the war; and by the measures we have taken we hope that our means of putting down this pest will grow continually. We are taking great care about that.

Therefore, to sum up the results of the first month, let us say that Poland has been overrun, but will rise again; that Russia has warned Hitler off his Eastern dreams; and that the U-boats may be safely left to the care and constant attention of the British Navy.

Now I wish to speak about what is happening in our own island. When a peaceful democracy is suddenly made to fight for its life there must be a lot of trouble and hardship in turning over from peace to war. I feel very keenly the reproaches of those who wish to throw themselves into the fight, but for whom we cannot find full scope at the present time. All this will clear as we get into our stride.

HIS Majesty's Government is unitedly resolved to make the maximum effort of which the British nation is capable, and to persevere, whatever may happen, until decisive victory is gained. Meanwhile patriotic men and women, and those who understand the high causes in human fortunes which are at stake, must not only rise above fear, they must also rise above inconvenience and boredom.

Parliament will be kept in session and all grievances or muddles or scandals can be freely ventilated there. In past times the House of Commons has proved itself an instrument of national will power capable of waging stern wars. Parliament is the shield and expression of democracy, and Ministers of the Crown base themselves upon the Parliamentary system.

A large army has already gone to France. British armies upon the scale of the effort of the Great War are in preparation. The British people are determined to stand in the line with the splendid army of the French Republic and share with them, as fast and as early as we can, whatever may be coming towards us both.

### Immense Resources at Britain's Command

IT may be that great ordeals are coming to us in this island from the air. We shall do our best to give a good account of ourselves, and we must always remember that the command of the seas will enable us to bring the immense resources of Canada and the New World into play as a decisive ultimate air factor beyond the reach of what we have to give and take over here.

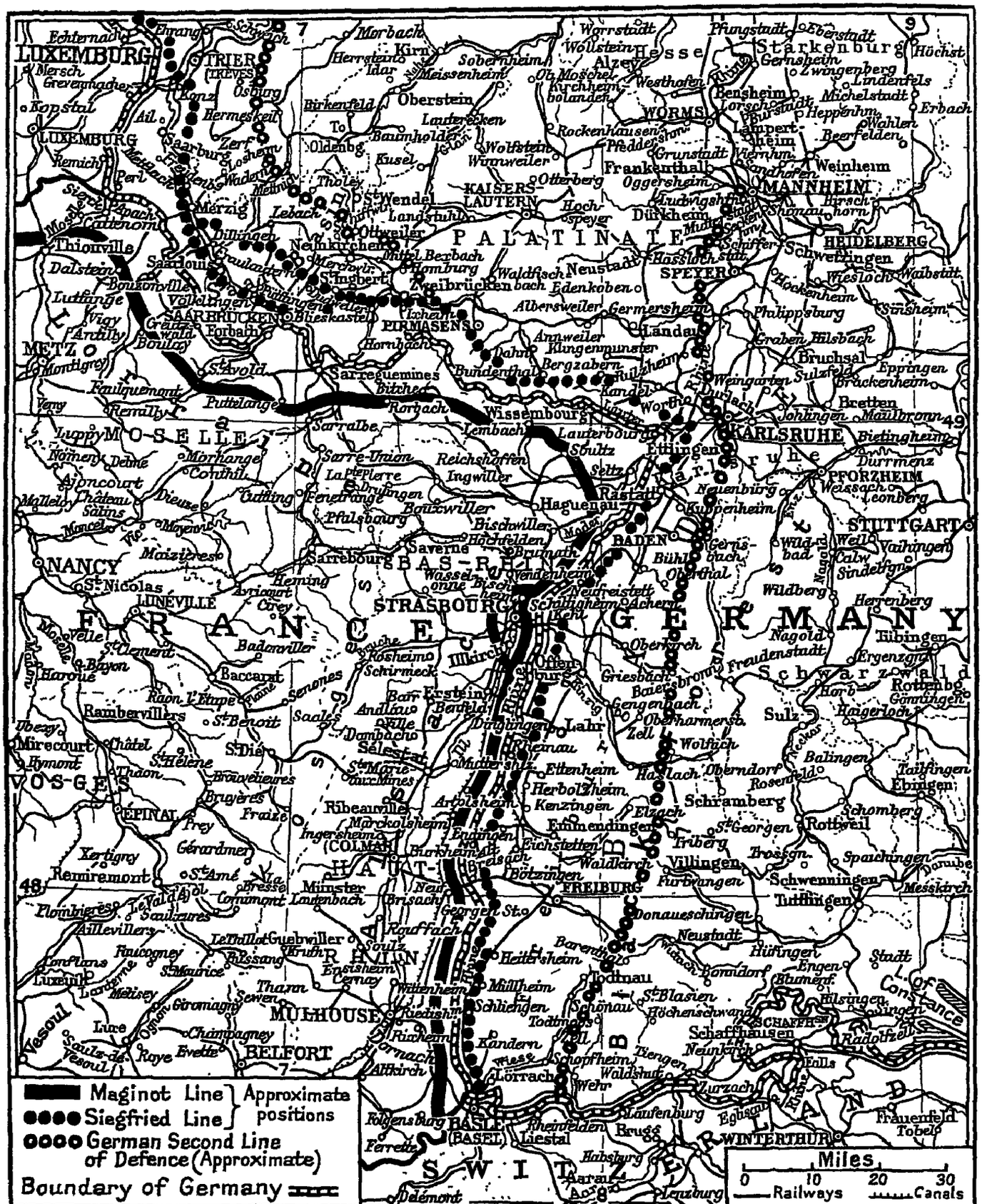
Directions have been given by the Government to prepare for a war of at least three years. That does not mean that victory may not be gained in a shorter time. How soon it will be gained depends upon how long Herr Hitler and his group of wicked men, whose hands are stained with blood and soiled with corruption, can keep their grip upon the docile, unhappy German people.

It was for Hitler to say when the war would begin, but it is not for him or his successors to say when it will end. It began when he wanted it, and it will end only when we are convinced that he has had enough.

The Prime Minister has stated our war aims in terms which cannot be bettered, and which cannot be too often repeated: "To redeem Europe from the perpetual and recurring fear of German aggression, and enable the peoples of Europe to preserve their independence and their liberties." That is what the British and French nations are fighting for.

How often have we been told we are the effete democracies whose day is done, and who must now be replaced by various forms of virile dictatorship and totalitarian despotism! No doubt at the beginning we shall have to suffer because of having too long wished to lead a peaceful life. Our reluctance to fight was mocked at as cowardice. Our desire to see an unarmed world was proclaimed as the proof of our decay.

NOW we have begun: now we are going on; now, with the help of God, and with the conviction that we are the defenders of civilization and freedom, we are going on, and we are going to go on to the end. I do not underrate [illegible] lies before us; but I must say this: I cannot [illegible] the strength to carry a good cause forwar[illegible] down the barriers which stand between t[illegible] masses of every land and a free and more ab[illegible]




FORTIFIED WESTERN FRONT WAR AREA

*Based upon a map by George Philip & Son*

Owing to the strength of the Maginot and Siegfried Lines, the Western Front campaign did not develop into a war of movement like that of the early part of the war of 1914-18. The French took advantage of German preoccupation with Poland to establish artillery in dominating positions in the No-man's-land between the opposing defence systems. The map above shows the area over which the campaign was fought in the first months of the war.

Chapter 11

# CARRYING THE WAR INTO GERMANY: 'TWIXT MAGINOT AND SIEGFRIED LINES

*'Operations Have Begun'—Quiet Preparation by the French—First Communiqué—Maginot and Siegfried Lines—New Kind of No-man's-land—'Progressing Beyond the Frontier'—Threat to Saarbruecken—Battle Front Widens—French Occupation of Warndt Forest—Ninety-mile Front on German Soil—Inactivity Along the Rhine—Strasbourg in Wartime*

WHEN France and Germany went to war in the autumn of 1914, armies of millions of men rushed to meet the shock of deadly combat Frontiers were crossed and re-crossed; neutrality was set at naught; cities were pulverized, towns and villages burnt; rapine was rampant, the carnage terrific. But a few weeks, and the number of the dead was counted by the hundred thousand, and an incalculable number were lying wounded in the hospitals, rotting in the prison camps, or wandering, lost and homeless, in a world that was savage and strange.

Twenty-five years later the age-old rivalry of Frank and Teuton was once again expressed in the clash of arms, but now the circumstances were very different. No great armies charged through the passes and across the plain, no peaceful countryside was converted into a waste by the ever-moving front of war. The guns spoke as of yore, the machine-guns chattered, the aeroplanes buzzed and hummed. But this time the armies rushed into no furious activity: they were mobilized to garrison the vast systems of defence which on each side guarded the frontier from the dunes of Flanders to the rocky foothills of the Alps.

For some days after the declaration of war on September 3 there was no news of fighting on the Western Front. While the German armies were crashing their way through the Polish defences and blasting a trail of destruction far behind the battle zone, in the west there was not sufficient to provide matter for even the most laconic communiqué. Not a gun was fired; not a bomb was dropped; not an aeroplane crossed the enemy lines. It was indeed "all quiet on the Western Front."

The first French communiqué was issued on the second day of the war, and merely stated that "Operations have been begun by the whole of the land, sea and air forces." Later in the same day came a second communiqué, which contained the news that "Contacts have been progressively made on the front. French naval forces have taken up positions assigned to them. Aerial forces are proceeding with the necessary reconnaissances." "There is reason to recall," said the communiqué issued in Paris on September 5, "that on the Rhine the permanent fortifications run along both banks of the river."

In these words we have the key to the apparent inactivity. In 1914 the war began as a war of movement; in 1939 the struggle was necessarily static—at least at the commencement—for where France and Germany met was no collection of outposts and solitary forts as twenty-five years before but vast fortified systems, immensely strong and tremendously deep, whose real nature was hardly suggested by the word "line."

There was a famous Hindenburg Line in 1917 and 1918 which cost the lives of many thousands of brave men before it was at length carried by assault. It was indeed a line, or rather series of lines, of trenches. But the Maginot Line, which runs down one side of the Franco-German frontier, and the Siegfried Line, which faces it across the river, are not lines but zones.



**ALLIED C.-IN-C.**

**General Marie Gustave Gamelin, Chief of the General Staff of National Defence in France, was, when war broke out, appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces on land. He served on Joffre's staff during the 1914–18 war.**

*Photo, Topical*

Of the two, the Maginot Line is beyond doubt the stronger, for it was the work of many years and of the most careful planning by the world's finest military engineers. Germany's Westwall, on the other hand, came into being only when, a year or so before the Munich Conference, Hitler realized that his aggressions might draw an attack from across the Rhine. No hurried scheming, not even the toil of hundreds of thousands of conscripted labourers, could hope to make a really effective counterpart of that tremendous creation of military defence which owed its origin to the calculating intelligence of André Maginot.

Running from Dunkirk to Basle, the main sector of the Maginot Line faces Germany across the Rhine. For hundreds of miles it forms a mighty buttress of steel and concrete worked most cunningly into the frame of Nature. Most of the fortifications are below ground, only a mound or a cupola reaching up from out of a tangled expanse of barbed wire. Guns by the thousand, great and small, moved and operated by electricity; vast subterranean passages along which regiments can march in unseen security, soldiers' quarters that are as capacious as they are comfortable, situated 100 or 150 feet below the ground; first-rate sanitation and hospital facilities; huge storehouses which a siege of many months would not empty—all these and much more mark the greatest and most powerful fortifications that the mind and labour of mankind have ever called into being.

Across the Rhine, following the French frontier and then, to the north, the frontiers of Luxemburg, Belgium and Holland, is the Siegfried Line, Hitler's answer to Maginot. Like its rival it is not a line but a zone, comprising numerous forts and strong-points connected by tunnels with underground assembly places, ammunition dumps and store-rooms. Above ground are innumerable pill boxes, tank-traps, thousands of acres of barbed wire,

mines and land-traps of all kinds. Though bearing all the signs of haste in its construction, it yet far surpasses any of the defence systems which were the graveyards of gallant and devoted legions in the last war.

In between the two "lines" is a No-man's-land of varying width—in some places only three miles separate Maginot from Siegfried, in others as many as thirteen miles. Here again the phrase may be misleading, for the No-man's-land of 1939 is something very different from that which lives in the memories of those who experienced trench warfare on the Somme or in Flanders. Instead of vast stretches of shell-pocked waste, filled with the horrible garbage of long-drawn-out battle and burying in its slime houses and hamlets, roads and railways, rivers and woods—instead of this horrible, evil-smelling expanse, there is a picturesque countryside, hilly and well-wooded, dotted with villages and farms. When war broke out, the inhabitants of this smiling region were evacuated—these to Germany, those to France—but otherwise the face of the land saw little change.

Several days were spent in the preliminaries of the advance. Then on Wednesday, September 6, the first French troops crossed the frontier into German territory. "Our first elements," read the French communiqué No. 6, "progressing beyond the frontier with an advance varying according to the different parts of the front, everywhere encountered automatic arms and field organizations."

This typically cautious pronouncement was tantalizing in its brevity, and the newspapers soon gave prominence to a number of stories fathered by speculation out of rumour. The advance, it was suggested, had been not only considerable but really penetrating, and the French patrols were already in touch with the outposts of the Siegfried Line. The French tanks had gone into action, and had carried all before them. Saarbruecken was under French fire and would soon be untenable. The French air force had gone far beyond what was claimed for it in the communiqué—"the activity of our Air Force is in liaison with the land operations"—and had bombed the vitally important industrial regions of the Ruhr and the Rhineland.

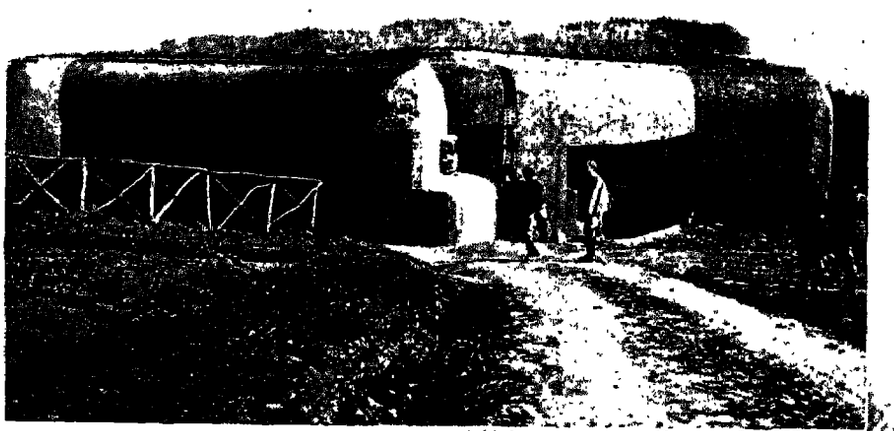
Against such a spate of exaggeration, of ill-informed attempts to fill in the bald outlines of the official story, the more responsible critics and commentators registered their protest. The Siegfried Line, they pointed out, was enormously strong, and it was not only ridiculous to suppose that it was threatened so early in the campaign, but such imaginings were definitely harmful to the Allied cause, inasmuch as they would give rise to hopes which time and experience must falsify. What was really happening, they maintained, was that the French were feeling their way into enemy territory, testing the enemy's strength here and there with a view to discovering the weak points in the line of defence. The main fortified zone, they repeated, lay some distance beyond the frontier, and it was moreover of considerable depth. The French patrols were approaching it, but to assume that they had already broken into it was absurd.

But limited as was the French advance and slow its progress, it had its repercussions far behind the immediate zone of operations.

**Civilians Flee the Saar**

Saarbruecken if not immediately threatened was distinctly uncomfortable, and the civilian population was evacuated. The same precaution was taken in towns much more distant, even as far as Aachen. Neutral observers reported the utmost congestion and confusion in the frontier regions. The main roads were packed with transport going up the line and with the vehicles of the fleeing populace. Trains were packed to suffocation. Air raids were an ever-present fear, and agents of the Gestapo were finding plenty to do.

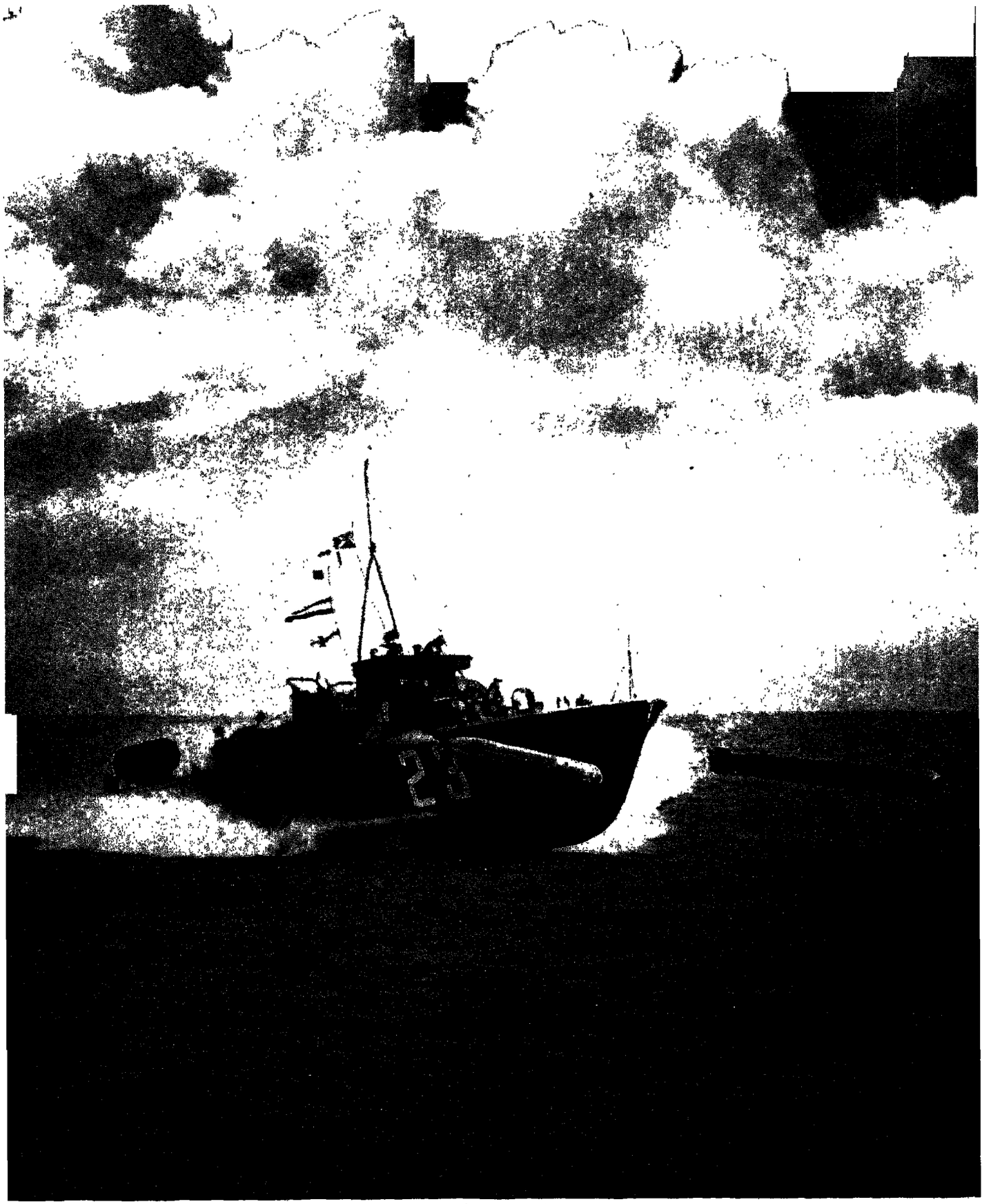
Twenty-four hours after the first report of the invasion of Germany there came another official statement in which it was reported that "there has been progressive occupation by French troops of the No-man's-land separating the Maginot and Siegfried Lines. This belt (went on the statement) extends at various points beyond the French frontier. Our troops are





**FRANCE'S FRONTIER FORTRESS**

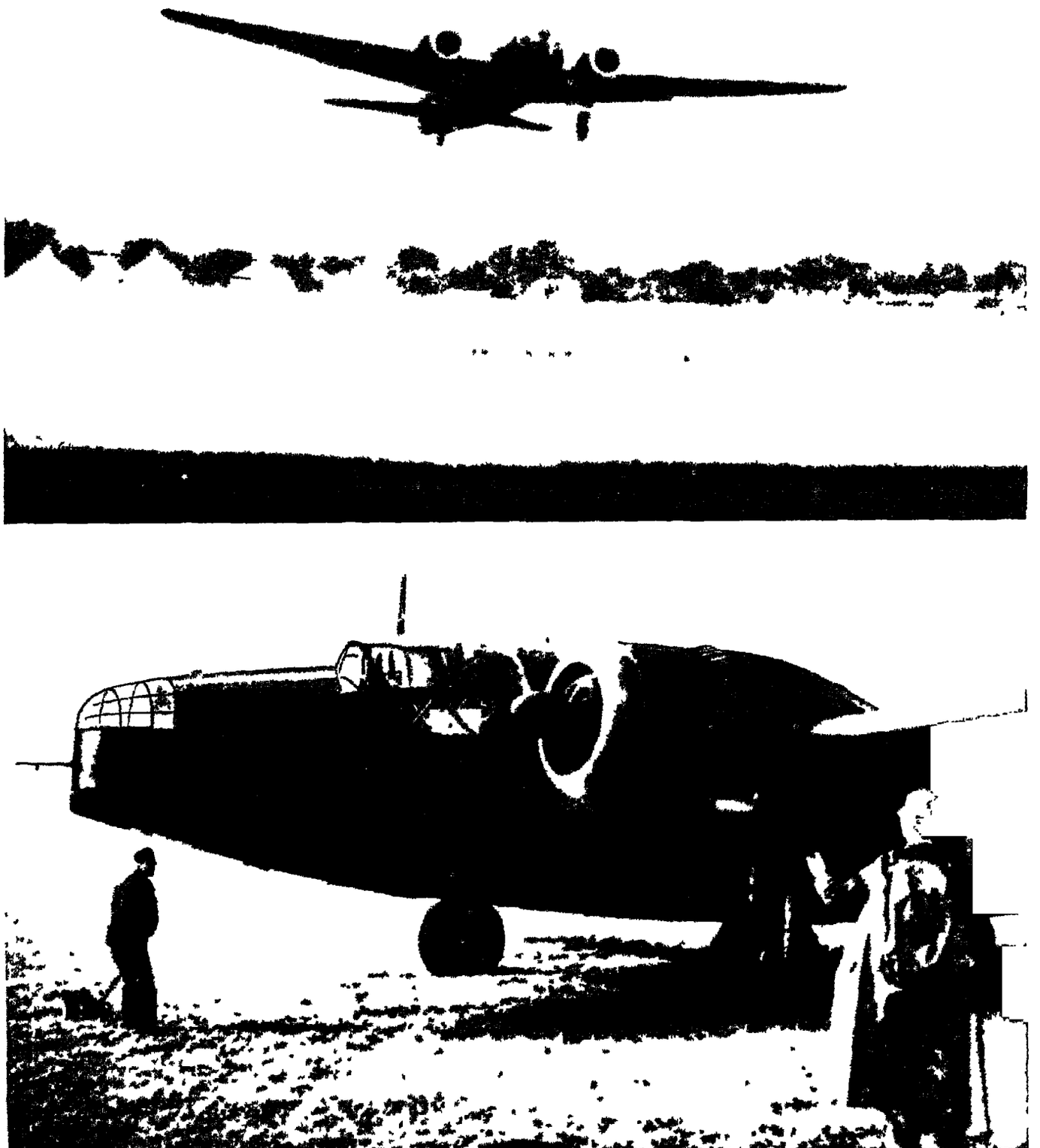
The upper photograph shows a massive strongpoint in France's Maginot Line; in the lower one (a "still" from the documentary film "The March of Time") are seen some of the guns, protected by squat cupolas almost flush with the ground and well hidden from sight.
*Photos, Keystone; Associated Press*



*Central Press*

## NAVAL 'WASP' WITH A POWERFUL STING

*The newest and smallest type of fighting craft in the Royal Navy is the M.T.B.—the motor torpedo boat.* These craft average about 60-70 feet in length and can move through the water at well over forty knots (46 m.p.h.). They are equipped with torpedo tubes and armed with small guns. A small boat, such as this, travelling at high speed is a difficult target to hit. The photograph above shows a motor torpedo boat firing her torpedoes while travelling at speed.



Photos G P U

START OF A GREAT ADVENTURE

These photographs were taken as the R A F bombing flight that raided the Kiel Canal naval bases on September 4 (see Chapter 8) left their home aerodromes The aircraft shown are of the Vickers "Wellington" type These heavy bombers can fly over 3,000 miles non-stop with a full load at 275 m p h The upper photograph shows one of the bombers taking off, while that below shows the Wing Commander waving goodbye and good luck to the Squadron Leader These historic photographs were included in the officially approved film "The Lion Has Wings"



Photos G.P.U.

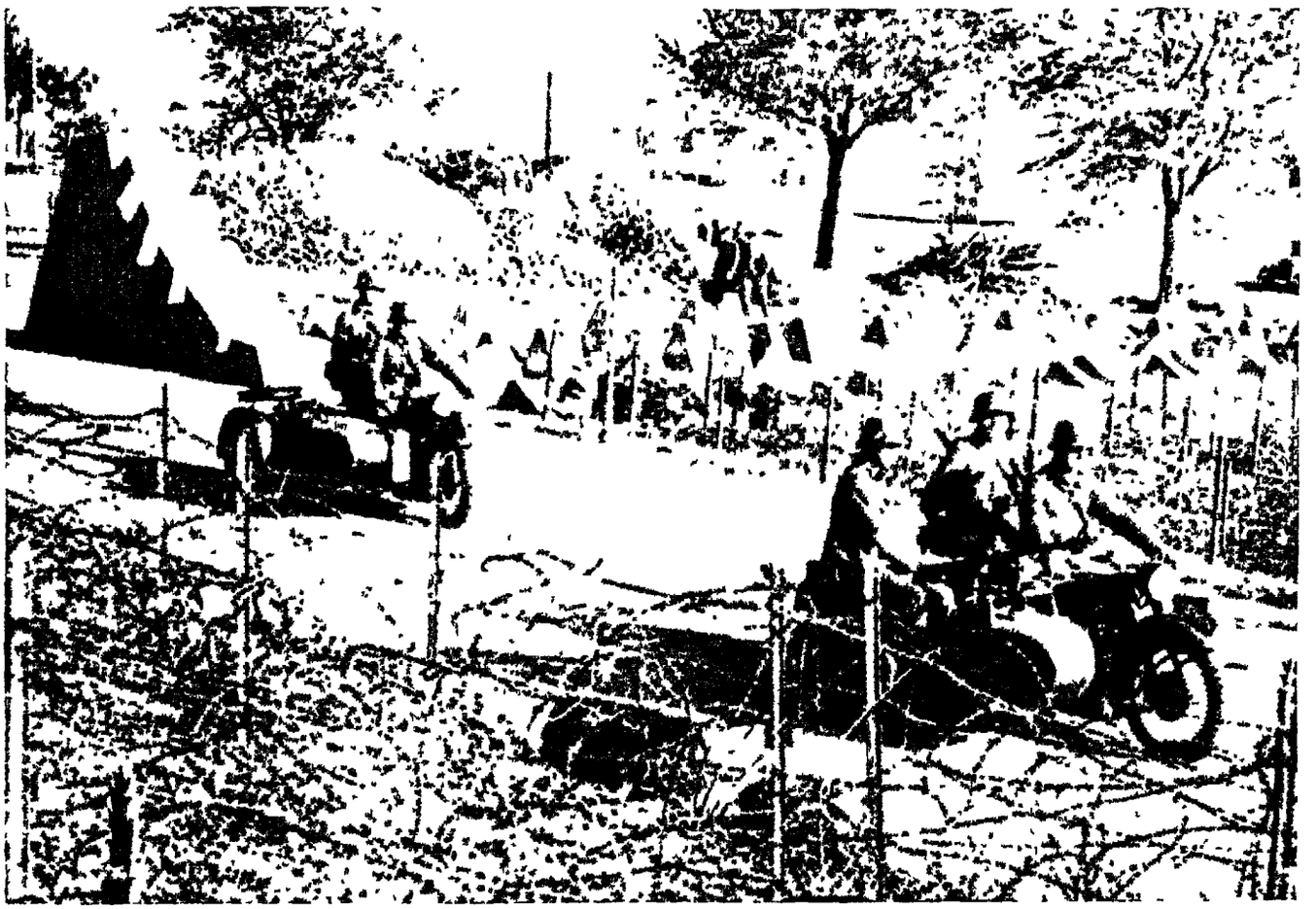
MORE SCENES FROM THE EPIC KIEL CANAL RAID

In the film "The Lion Has Wings" the reconstruction of the actual raids on Brunsbuttel and Wilhelmshaven (see Chapter 8) were made in the studio from reports of the men who took part in them, and the "shot" (top) showing two of the men at their stations in the bomber during the flight is one of these. But the film also shows the actual departure and return of the squadron, and above one of the pilots is seen smoking a welcome cigarette on landing.



HITLER INTERESTS HIMSELF IN HIS FLEET

Hitler, who until the war displayed little knowledge of German naval affairs, is here seen being shown over the German "pocket" battleship "Deutschland" by Grand Admiral of the Reich, Erich Raeder. Admiral Raeder, who is the Commander-in-Chief of the German naval forces, was Chief of Staff to Admiral Hipper during the 1914-18 war. The "Deutschland" is a vessel of 10,000 tons and well armed for her size, her armament including six 11-in. guns and eight torpedo tubes. The opening phases of the war at sea are discussed in Chapter 10.



CONCRETE AND WIRE DEFEND THE REICH

Here a German motor-cycle unit is seen passing through a section of the Siegfried Line, or "Westwall," Germany's western frontier fortifications. In the foreground is a formidable barrier of barbed wire, to delay infantry attacks, while behind are concrete obstacles, designed and placed so as to hinder the advance of enemy tanks

*Photo, Fox*

mopping up machine-gun nests in this area and coming up against advanced field works. Meanwhile, along the Maginot Line, the placing of mobilized units has been carried out in perfect order."

So relentless was the French penetration of German territory that, late in the evening, Paris stated that on the front between the Rhine and the Moselle the enemy had received large reinforcements. But still the progress was maintained. "We have been able to make local advances of varying importance," read the next French official communiqué, "appreciably improving the conditions of our advance at certain points."

Day after day the pressure was maintained, and at last the German people at large were permitted to know that not only had hostilities on the Western Front begun, but that the Fatherland was actually invaded. A week after the war started, and four or five days after the French had begun their forward movement, the German High Command broadcast a bulletin from Berlin at 2 p.m. on Sunday, September 10, which read: "In the West, French armoured cars have, for the first time, crossed the German frontier and have been engaged by our outposts situated far in advance of the Western fortifications. The enemy left behind numerous dead and prisoners, among whom was one officer."

A few hours later the French communiqué reported further progress: "A series of methodical actions has enabled our forces to advance between the Saar and the Vosges. The enemy has delineated an offensive movement to the east of the Moselle in the region to the north-east of Sierck." Later came the news that the enemy defences in the Warndt Forest had been wiped out, and the week-end closed with the French line in the region of operations entirely in German territory.

*Sierck, Warndt Forest, Saarbruecken*—these names give the limits of the opening phase of the fighting. The first is a watering-place on the Moselle just before it leaves France to form the boundary between Luxemburg and Germany. Warndt Forest is a coal-mining area in a pocket of German territory south of Saarlautern and to the west of Saarbruecken. The latter

**Significance of the Saar**

in peacetime had a population of some 129,000. It lies in the heart of one of the richest coalfields in Europe, but it was not its mineral wealth that brought it within the sphere of military operations in 1939. Rather it was because it lies at one extreme of the valley of the Saar, a tributary of the Moselle which is a tributary of the Rhine—the valley which occupies a gap between the Ardennes and the Vosges and so constitutes a natural gateway between France and Germany. It is a bottleneck forming a highway for the caravans of commerce and the armies of war.

*For hundreds of years its importance* won it a place in history. During the Thirty Years' War and the wars of Louis XIV of the 17th century it was laid waste by the armies which marched time and again through the valley on their way to the battlefields in the plains to east or west. Two hundr later it was the scene of [illegible] ing in the France



DOMINATED BY FRENCH GUNS

The Saar Basin, an extensive coal-mining district of Germany, lying just over the French frontier between the rivers Moselle and Lauter, was dominated by the French long-range guns as soon as war broke out, and the civil population of the large industrial town of Saarbruecken was evacuated by the German authorities. Above is a general view of the Saarbruecken mines.

*Photo, Photopress*

it escaped the war of 1914–18 only because the frontier of Germany was then far to the west, in Lorraine. For sixteen years after the Armistice it was occupied by the French under the League of Nations, but in January, 1935, it reverted to the Reich as the result of a plebiscite.

Now the French were back again. From the west the guns of the Maginot Line commanded the valley, and every day the French patrols and outposts approached ever nearer to the historic stream and its burden of towns and hamlets. To that tangle of heavily wooded hills, with its orchards and vineyards, its meadows and cornfields, backed by a sombre multitude of factory chimneys, pithead wheels, and slag heaps—to this region where meet town and country, the spacious culture of the Age of the Louis and the grimy richness of the Age of Metals and Machinery, war and its grim accompaniments drew near with relentless step.

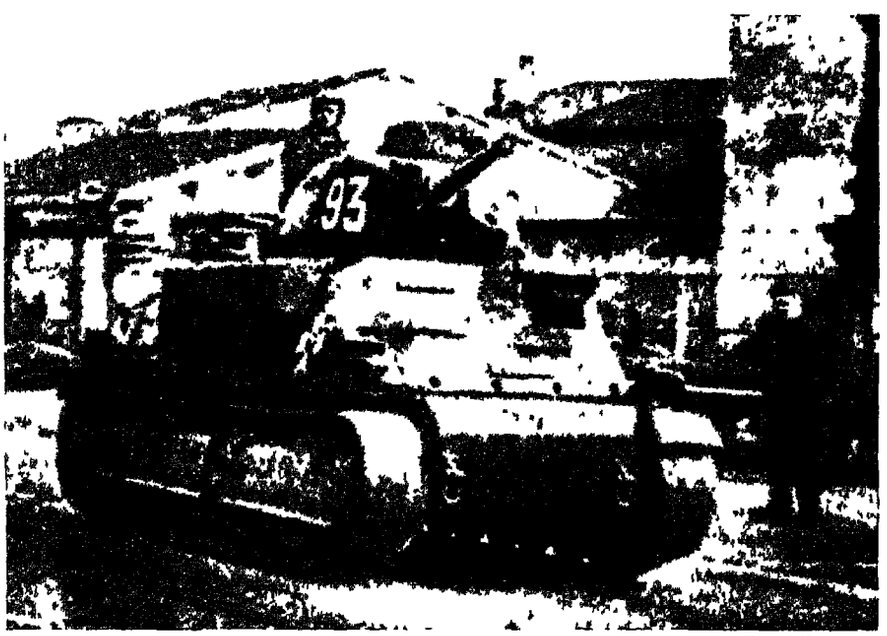
Resistance was greatest near Sierck, where the Germans made desperate efforts to prevent the French from moving down the Moselle and so driving a wedge between the Luxemburg border and the Siegfried defences south of Trier (Treves). Luxemburgers stationed in Remich had a grandstand view of the struggle, and there were reports of French bayonet charges across open farmland and of drives by the great 70-ton French tanks. Soon, too, the front widened, and the roar of battle extended from opposite Merzig to Pirmasens, twenty miles to the east of Saarbruecken. Day and night the struggle continued.

Step by step the French advanced, gingerly feeling their way through a terrain left difficult by Nature, but made infinitely more difficult by the ingenuity of man, with his land mines and tank traps, machine-gun posts and "booby traps" in extraordinary and deadly variety. Gamelin, it was said in Paris, knew his business, he was planning every move so as to derive from it the maximum benefit with the very minimum of loss in man power.

Following the complete occupation of the Warndt Forest the French covered the approach to Saarbruecken and threatened Volklingen, a highly important railway junction on the Saar just south of Saarlautern—Saarlouis as it is still sometimes named, recalling the French occupation of the 17th century.

A fortnight after the war began Saarbruecken was unofficially stated to be practically surrounded; its aerodrome was being bombarded by the French artillery, and so, too, were many of its environs. To the south of the town the French infantry and tanks had captured the heights above the little river Blies, and over a front of some twelve miles had made gains of an average depth of about a mile.

The Germans for their part maintained a reticence surpassing that of the French. "Only unimportant fighting between advanced posts," they declared; yet observers reported feverish activity in strengthening the defences of the Siegfried Line, and the German artillery heavily shelled the slopes on which the




'CHAR DE COMBAT' ON GERMAN SOIL

*Photo, Keystone*

The French tanks, or "chars de combat," proved extremely effective during the French advance into German territory in September, 1939. In the photograph above a French tank is seen on the move through a captured German village. Heavy Tank units are used to break resistance and open the way for infantry, while the Light Tank units act in liaison with the attackers.

French had secured a foothold. Faced by the prospect of the imminent fall of Saarbruecken—which though evacuated was still vastly important from the point of view of morale—they hurried up large bodies of reinforcements, and brought under heavy artillery fire the roads leading to the French lines and the towns—Sarreguemines and the rest—in the immediate war zone.

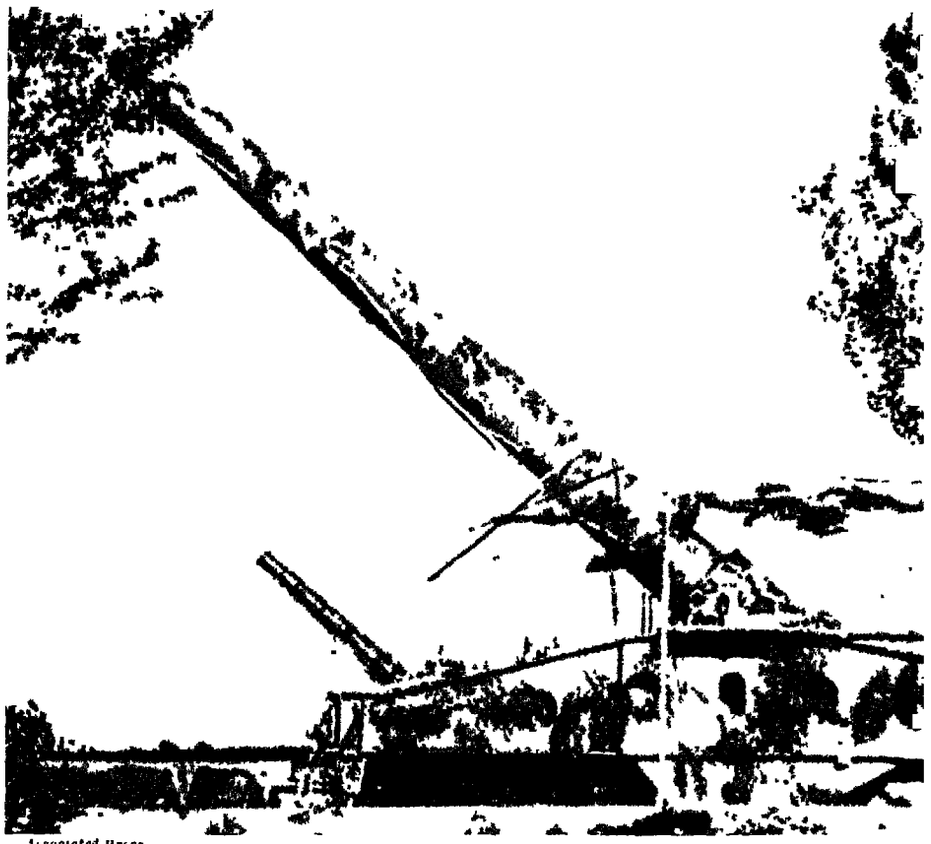
Nevertheless, the French continued to make progress which, considering all the circumstances, was highly satisfactory. They also extended their operations so that by the end of the second week of the war the entire ninety miles' front between the Moselle and the Rhine at Wissembourg was now on German soil.

Saarbruecken was still in German hands, although there was little doubt that it could be seized at any moment by the troops who had virtually encircled it. The commentators were shrewd enough to realize, however, that the fall of the city would at once invite a counter-attack, the success of which would be loudly acclaimed in the Reich as a great victory. Far better, then, to continue to dominate the town, to prevent its occupation by its busy folk and the working of the valuable mines in the district on whose production Germany's war effort was so largely dependent.

So, on September 15, Paris announced that "we have consolidated the positions taken during previous days and repelled a counter-attack, inflicting losses on the enemy; there has been strong reaction by aircraft and artillery on part of the front," while Berlin rejoined with the report that "enemy artillery is active east of Saarbruecken." Such communiqués seemed to become part of the established order. Day after day they told of artillery duels, of heavy bombardments, of brief infantry raids, of hardly interrupted aerial activity by reconnaissance 'planes.

**Uncommunicative Communiqués**

But what of the rest of the front—of that long stretch of a hundred miles and more where France looks at Germany across the waters of the Rhine? As in 1914, so in 1939, in the southern sector of the battle-line there was little to report of offensive operations. The great river constituted an almost impassable obstacle to military movements, for the bridges could be—and many were—cut by the opposing engineers, pontoon bridges could be easily destroyed by the batteries on the river banks, and the transport of tanks and other heavy machinery of war would present an almost insuperable problem. Close to the river on either side run the great fortified zones of the Maginot and Siegfried Lines, and behind these both east and west are natural obstacles of the most forbidding description. On the French side are the Vosges Mountains. On the other side of the Rhine runs the German counterpart of the Vosges — the mass of hilly country known commonly as the Black Forest.



Associated Press

DEATH FROM A DISTANCE

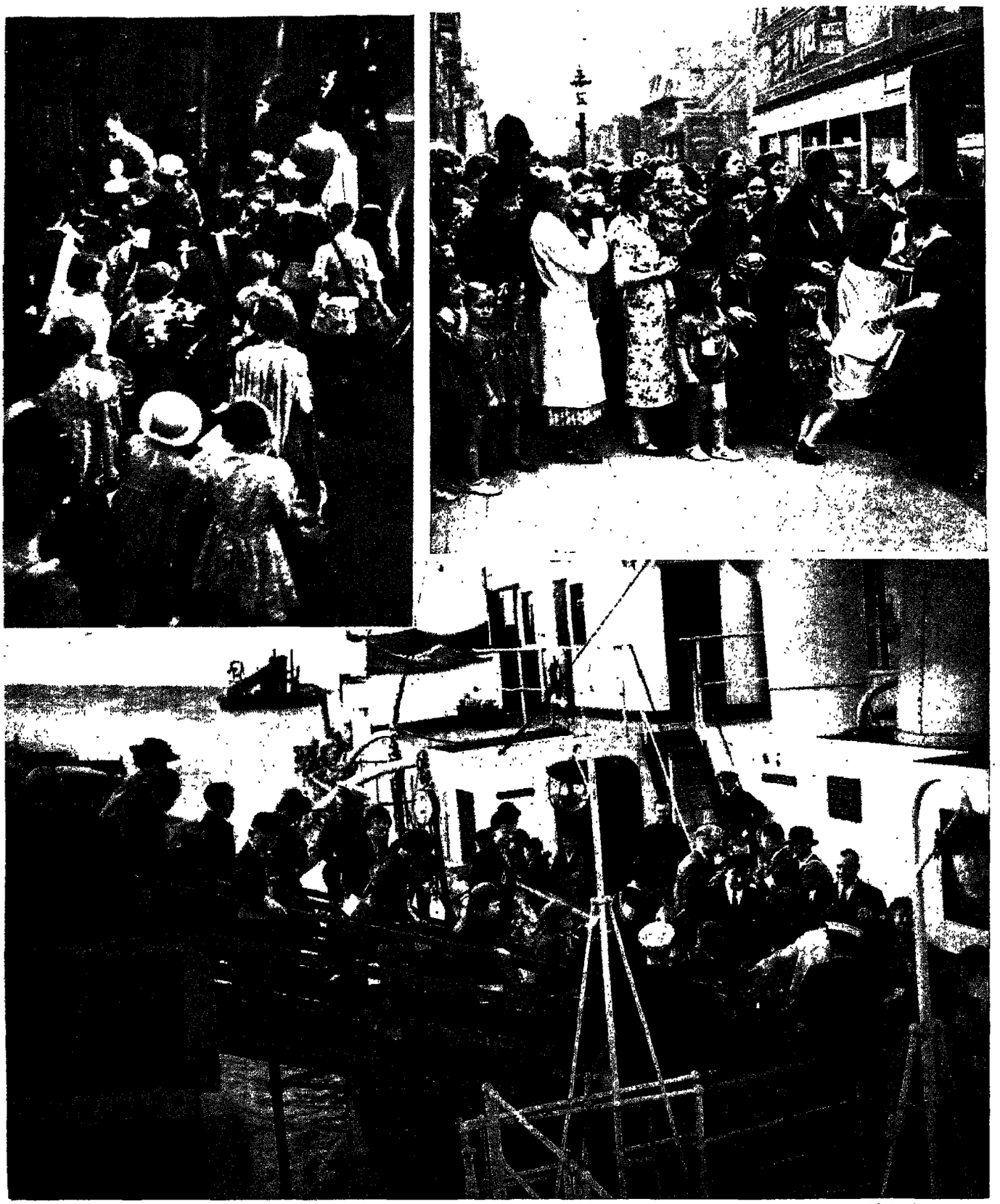
Above are seen two huge French long-range guns behind the lines on the Western Front. They belong to that category of French artillery known as "artillerie lourde à grande puissance"—a category which includes both long guns of over 20 kilometres' range and short guns of medium range firing an extremely heavy and powerful shell. Those seen above, on special mountings, well camouflaged by nets and branches, worked havoc with the German defences and communications

When the war began this great stretch of river and valley, mountain and forest, assumed its martial guise. From Strasbourg, Mulhouse and Colmar and many of the smaller towns departed trains of evacuees, moving to areas of greater safety in the heart of France; from Freiburg, Karlsruhe and their satellites a procession wended slowly in the opposite direction. On the river all traffic was stopped; the bridges were closed if not actually broken, and from each bridgehead peered the observers of rival armies, deeply embedded in acres of barbed wire. Some imperturbable spirits amongst the local peasantry continued as long as possible at their normal tasks, and the gunners on either side, fingering their triggers, watched the harvesters.

As by an extinguisher dropped over a candle flame the everyday life of hundreds of thousands of highly cultured folk was suddenly eclipsed. For twenty years the peoples on opposite banks of the Rhine had done their best to adjust their existence to the new conditions introduced after the Armistice in 1918. Now in the twinkling of an eye they were back again in the terrible time of 1870 when Alsace had not yet been restored to Germany, and France and Germany were warring to the death.

Perhaps the best illustration of the great change wrought by war was afforded by Strasbourg. This great city of some 200,000 people, situated on the Rhine and directly connected by road and rail with Kehl and all the German and far-European world beyond—this pride of the French republic was reduced to a life of empty silence.

Most of its population had been evacuated behind the Vosges; only a thousand or so still continued to live in the city, and their homes were the cellars which lay beneath the beautiful old houses. The trains from Paris no longer rattled across the bridge, and the stream of motors had been changed into a nocturnal trickle of army lorries. Not now did a cheerful crowd of Alsatian folk chatter and chaffer in the market-place, nor the shop-boys look up at the cathedral's world-famous clock. By day the streets were well-nigh deserted, and at night the silence was broken only by the steady tramp of the patrols going their rounds and the occasional discharge of a gun as they fired at a stray cat or dog left homeless in a world at war.



*Photos, Keystone*

## TO SAFETY BY RAIL, ROAD, AND SEA

**Above are typical scenes during the great evacuation of children from the danger zones, showing how every form of transport was pressed into service. Top left, school children are seen boarding a train at Waterloo. Top right, parents are seeing their children off from the Lady Violet Melchett Infant Welfare Centre at Chelsea, as they leave by 'bus for their new homes in the country. Bottom, children boarding a steamer at Portsmouth en route for the Isle of Wight.**

Chapter 12

# TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS OF THE MASS EVACUATION

*An Impressive Episode—Triumph of Organization and Voluntary Effort—Rehearsal that became Reality—One-and-three-quarter Million Transported to Safety—Billeting Problems—Stemming the Townward Trend—Financing the Evacuation—Far-reaching Influence of the 'Great Trek'*

EVEN Government statistics can be thrilling. One of the most impressive episodes in the early days of the war was the transfer of over one million eight hundred thousand town-dwellers to safer places in the country. This unprecedented migration took place during the four days ending Monday, September 4, 1939. What it meant in successful organization and the adaptation of Britain's resources of rail, road and water can easily be imagined. But a deeply moving human story lies behind the bare historic record: a story of tears and smiles, of farewells and eager ventures; a story, it is safe to say, which will be found to have played no small part in the social evolution of the time.

Who were these emigrants, called upon by the impending peril of war to leave the known for the unknown? From the London area alone the exodus consisted of 376,652 school children accompanied by their teachers; 275,895 young children under the care of their mothers; 3,577 expectant mothers, and 3,403 adult blind. In the movement away from danger-zones in the Provinces were 757,583 school children; 445,580 young children with their mothers; 11,293 expectant mothers; 5,253 adult blind, and 872 cripples.

Never before had school playgrounds and railway stations seen so much waving and smiling. The children themselves were wonderful. An observer at one of the London railway termini mingled with the crowd of happy youngsters. He began to question them as to where they came from. They could all answer that inquiry. But when it came to stating whither they were bound none of them seemed to know.

"What!" he said. "You don't know where the train is taking you?"

There was silence, until one youngster blurted out: "We don't know, sir; but the King knows!"

Strictly, this was not true, but in a deeper sense it was. There was an organization that knew, for the whole evacuation had been carefully planned as far back as the crisis in 1938. There had even been a rehearsal. Before the summer holiday had actually ended, on Monday, August 28, London's thousands of school children went back to school to take part in a great evacuation rehearsal. Every L.C.C. school inspector was on duty. Teachers and voluntary helpers were in their places. Many of the children arrived at school by 6 a.m., with gas-masks and parcels of clothes, and food for the day. Each school had been given a number and had been told where and when they were to proceed to station or coach. While the teachers were inspecting gas-masks and kit, marshals at the stations were inspecting the arrangements there prior to reporting to their divisional headquarters. All through the day this went on, and thousands of mothers stood by the playgrounds watching their children go through their paces, each child bearing on a knapsack the school number, together with name and address. Nothing was left to chance.

Within a week from that Monday the rehearsal had become reality, and the first wave of the evacuation had almost spent itself, bearing thousands of tired but happy children on its crest to new shores. Opinion among competent

**EVACUATION STATISTICS**
*Supplied by Ministry of Health*
October 13, 1939

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **London Area** | | |
| *Possible number of evacuated* .. | 1,828,482 | |
| *Actually evacuated* | 659,527 | (36%) |
| Made up as follows: | | |
| Children accompanied by teachers .. .. .. .. | | 376,652 |
| Young children and mothers.. | | 275,895 |
| Expectant mothers.. .. .. | | 3,577 |
| Adult blind .. .. .. .. | | 3,403 |
| **Provincial Areas** | | |
| *Possible number of evacuated* .. | 3,644,253 | |
| *Actually evacuated* | 1,220,581 | (33%) |
| Made up as follows: | | |
| Children accompanied by teachers .. .. .. .. | | 757,583 |
| Young children and mothers.. | | 445,580 |
| Expectant mothers .. .. | | 11,293 |
| Adult blind .. .. .. .. | | 5,253 |
| Cripples .. .. .. .. | | 872 |

The second wave of evacuation had a possible number of 35,528, but the response was small.



**WOMEN WHO WORKED FOR CHILDREN'S WELFARE**

Here are two of the heads of the Women's Voluntary Services: left, Miss Alice Johnston, head of the Evacuation Department, who was mainly responsible for the safe conduct of London mothers and children into the safety zones; right, Mrs. Rupert Scott, in charge of the reception arrangements.



LITTLE ONES TREK TO SAFETY

Long before war was declared plans for the evacuation of children from the urban danger zones had been carefully prepared; and in the last few days of August the evacuation scheme was put into effect with remarkable rapidity. Above, children from Benwell Road School, Holloway, with their gas-masks and spare clothing, are seen en route for their destination in the country.

*Photo, Keystone*

observers was unanimous that the tremendous undertaking had been completely successful. "I maintain," said one of the workers, "that it was a miracle of organization and not a simple transmigration. For two days I was the humblest of workers in the thick of it, and I take off my hat successively to the L.C.C., the Board of Education, the Ministry of Health, the teachers, the railways, the transport companies, and the organized workers. And, finally, the biggest and longest hat-raising of all to the British mothers and to the children." Speaking of the London effort, Mr. Herbert Morrison, M.P., Leader of the L.C.C., bore testimony to the splendid behaviour of all concerned, a tribute echoed in all the Provincial areas.

It was with sighs of relief that the workers saw their companies off on coach, train or river-steamer; but what happened at the other end of the journey? The reception-areas had an even bigger part to play. Children and mothers had to be sorted out for their various billets. Thousands of postcards had to be written, so that anxious parents at home might know where their boys and girls were located. Church halls or school premises had to be prepared for the invasion of eager, expectant youth. At first it was not possible to arrange for the interrupted lessons to be resumed, and the spirit of the August holidays persisted well into September. But by degrees teachers and children got to work again, though with short periods for lessons and, in many cases, with double shifts. The shortage of school accommodation made it necessary in some districts for lessons to be given in fields, or on the beach. Often, the teachers carried their duties of supervision far beyond school-hours into the darkened nights.

**Journey's End**

The daily Press of that period did much to spread the story of the successful venture. Boys and girls who had never seen farm-life before provided good material for the Press photographer. He was able to snap groups of happy youngsters racing down the village lane when lunch-bell rang, or setting out on a blackberrying expedition, or watching one of their number emulating Henry Cotton on a golf course, or playing ring-a-roses without a background of streets and chimneys. It was such pictures, and the descriptive writing which accompanied them, that found their way into millions of British homes and did something to reassure lonely fathers left behind. Those who still felt acutely the absence of their children began to glow with pride as they read the statements of teachers. Here is one: "In four days my charges have succeeded in doing something which, a week ago, I would not have believed possible. They have won their way into the hearts of phlegmatic English countrywomen; they have so endeared themselves to the village people that I am afraid before long those who have billeted small groups will be rationed to one child each. Even then my brood of twenty-eight London chicks won't be enough to go round."

So far all had been excitement and novelty. But before long problems began to arise. This was only to be expected. The experiment was on so large a scale, and was without guiding precedent. Complaints began to find their way into the correspondence columns of the Press—many of them, it must be said, with real foundation. "The Times" of September 15, 1939, commenting on a debate in the House of Commons, declared:

**Problems and Complaints**

"It is not surprising that the House of Commons was impelled last night to discuss the problems of evacuation. Certain troubles and grievances were bound to follow the dispersal of nearly a million and a half town-dwellers, mostly children and women, into the country and other areas of safety. None of the complaints put forward in our correspondence columns has been trivial or unreasonable. Collectively, however, they are serious, and are even more widespread than the published letters have indicated. The Ministries of Health and of Education have, in communications to local authorities, recognized the necessity for remedial measures, and are stirring up the authorities to helpful and sympathetic action, and assuring them of Treasury assistance."

The Minister of Health, Mr. Walter Elliot, admitted the ground for complaint, and urged that "tact, tolerance, and understanding, as well as administrative enterprise and ingenuity, will be required."

Well-attested incidents certainly gave strength to the Minister's plea. There were the difficulties experienced by the householders in the reception areas, suddenly confronted with the care of children of a class to which they were not accustomed. In some areas little attention had been paid to the suitability of the children for the districts to which they had been sent. Hundreds of children, for example, from a Roman Catholic area in a provincial city had been evacuated to an area where there was little if any provision for the spiritual needs of that Communion. In another case, children arriving from a densely-crowded industrial area had been billeted in large houses; while secondary school children, arriving later, had been housed in the poorest dwellings. It was open to anyone with a zeal for social levelling to argue that





such a policy had its advantages; but from the standpoint of the hosts in question the arrangement could be characterized as no less than thoughtless bungling.

More serious was the complaint of the insanitary condition of some of the evacuated children. "The Times" leader already referred to spoke with directness on this question.

"Some of the really bad features of this migration cannot, of course, be tolerated at all. The insanitary cases, verminous or diseased, must be treated at once as infringements of the public health requirements and be subjected to medical and judicious disciplinary treatment. The Ministry of Health acknowledges that the billeting of this type of person in respectable homes is unreasonable. As official language errs on the side of moderation the word 'unreasonable' should be construed by the local authorities as synonymous with unjustifiable and indefensible."

The "misfits" in the evacuation scheme, problems though they were, occasionally provided amusement. To the home of a Methodist lay-preacher came two children to whom churchgoing was something of which they had heard but in which they had never indulged. It was reported that, one Sunday morning, when the head of the household had set off for church, his wife was astonished to hear the query: "Where's the guv'nor? Has he gone off to have one?" Probably the lady in question saw the humorous side of it, which could hardly be said, however, of another hostess who came down one morning to find two exuber[illegible] lads carving their initials on the f[illegible] panel of a Chippendale bu[illegible]

**COCKNEYS IN THE COUNTRY**

**The London children seen in the upper photograph, in an evacuation area in Essex, doubtless enjoyed what was to them the novel experience of helping with the hay. Above, school children evacuated to a South Coast town are asking a steel-helmeted policeman the way to their new school.**

*Photos, Fox and Associated Press*



wards: just as when, in the second week of September, registration for a further evacuation movement was encouraged, it met with small response.

The children who had not taken part in the evacuation presented a special problem. For them no organized schools were open, and although efforts of various kinds were made, such as gathering groups of children for lessons in private houses, the problem remained.

The impact of the evacuation scheme came with full force on organizations like the Sunday School movement. In a few days hundreds of Sunday Schools were deprived of almost all their scholars, while in reception areas facilities for such necessary work were heavily strained. It was realized that the complete disorganization of the Sunday School system was fraught with real

But the problems were not all on the side of the reception areas. In many cases the evacuated children, and no less the mothers who had accompanied them, found it difficult to adapt themselves to completely new surroundings. At first the prospect of changing crowded town for village or countryside was full of attraction, but it was soon discovered that evenings in the country, especially under the conditions of the black-out, were depressingly dull. The teachers, aided by willing workers in the areas, did their best to provide healthy recreation for the children, but that did not prevent many of the mothers from returning home. By the middle of September the Minister of Health thought it necessary to advise mothers not to return home. To those who argued that the absence of air raids up to that time made home as safe a place as any other, he said: "The fact that up to the present no air raids have taken place in the large towns does not affect the position."

To those who found it embarrassing to share a home with another mother and her family, he said: "The mother who has arrived with her child is not under any obligation to take part in domestic work, except so far as concerns the rooms she occupies herself. But it will clearly add to the comfort and amity of the household and to her own self-respect if she co-operates in those borderline functions which are inevitable when there are two families in one small house, and is scrupulously careful about the condition of the rooms in which she lives." It was found, however, that such advice was unable to stem the flow home-



SAFETY-ZONE WORK AND PLAY *Photos, Fox, Keystone*

**Evacuated children soon adapted themselves to their new surroundings. Children of big towns do not have many opportunities for swimming in sea and river, and those in the top photograph enjoyed themselves hugely while one of their number constituted himself guardian of the gas-masks. Above, Liverpool children at Formby, on the Lancashire coast, are undertaking the important task of filling sandbags.**

dangers for the moral and spiritual welfare of England's children.

Finally the evacuation raised serious financial difficulties. The upkeep of the evacuated children cost the government £450,000 a week. Early in October it was announced that, in future, their parents must help the Treasury. It had been worked out that the average cost of maintenance per child was 9s. a week. Henceforward parents would be expected to contribute 6s. towards that amount, and notice was given that after October 28 parents who could afford would be asked to pay the full amount. These financial arrangements did not pass without criticism. Both parents of evacuated children and householders who received them saw difficulties in it. There was, for example, the case of the good-class home with a high standard of living. The government allowance to householders was 10s. 6d. for one child, and 8s. 6d. where more than one child was billeted. (Later the rate was modified to 10s. 6d. per week in all cases for unaccompanied school children who had attained the age of 16.) The reception-home with a high standard of living was compelled either to lower its standard, or supplement the State allowance. On the other hand, the rate allowed to reception-homes was criticized on the ground that it was unfair to the unemployed and the soldiers, inasmuch as the allowance for food, rent and clothing for the child of an unemployed person was 3s., and the soldier's allowance 5s. for the first child, 3s. for the second, 2s. for the third, and for subsequent children only 1s.

**Counting the Cost**

It was inevitable that in a scheme of this kind anomalies should appear. Yet it was agreed that the migration and settlement were carried through with typically British good humour. "In two days," declared one of the workers, "I saw more of the British milk of human kindness poured out than you would find in a lifetime of normality."

It will be a task for the historian, as in calmer, happier days he looks back upon the events of this critical period of British life, to estimate the importance of this great trek from town to country. Its immediate purpose, of course, was safeguarding as far as was possible the lives of the coming generation in time of national peril. It was a wartime expedient, carried through with amazing skill and (all things considered) success. But its significance lay far deeper than the purpose which was its occasion. What the movement meant to the health of the nation cannot easily be estimated. It was doubtless a shock to those who



**'OPEN WIDER, PLEASE!'**

In France, as in England, school children were evacuated from the danger zones when war was seen to be inevitable. In this photo, children evacuated from Paris are undergoing medical inspection on arrival at their new billets.

*Photo, Wide World*

prided themselves on the clinical excellence of the schools when they learned that children, in spite of all that educational authorities might do, could still be verminous. But that very fact gave an added value to the experiment. Life in the country, away from crowded streets and tenements, could not fail to bring a glow to faded cheeks and a new light to tired eyes. What of those thousands of children to whom the commotion of this upheaval meant, for the first time in their lives, first-hand experience of cows and sheep and of the glorious countryside? How eloquent that passage from a Cotswold observer:

"The newcomers have gone into raptures over the stacked wheat and barley not yet brought in from the fields; and when Harry Carter drove a cow and her day-old calf through the village he was obliged to take severe measures to prevent the calf from being injured by over-petting."

Historians have often laid stress on the significance of the movement from countryside to town in the far-off days of the Industrial Revolution. The question may be permitted whether wartime experiences have not done something to restore to British youth a love for the matchless rural scene.

Nor can it have been without value that two different sections of the population should have learned how the other lived. Children from the cities' crowded streets learned for the first time what it was like to live in a house with ample space, and that there were such things as table manners. On the other hand, boys and girls from more fortunate homes learned that not every child had their own advantages. In both cases the process of learning brought something of a shock; but when the shock was over, was not the result socially beneficial? If it be true that one half the world doesn't know how the other half lives, the great evacuation surely did something to remedy that ignorance.

Most important of all, the rapid transfer of so large a section of population revealed what has always been a valuable trait in British character. We have become so accustomed to that fine spirit of comradeship under challenging conditions which is the mark of the British soldier that we have come to take it for granted. But the evacuation showed the same quality on the civilian front, revealing that, when danger looms ahead, courage and adaptability and a readiness to greet the unusual with a cheer are typical of the British people as a whole. Commenting on the wisdom of the evacuation and the success of its organization, one writer declared, "The future generation is as safe as it can be." He was thinking of safety from the perils of war. But his words had a deeper interpretation. If the general spirit shown in the September evacuation is any guide, the future generation is safe to uphold the finest traditions of the British race.

**Friends in Need . . .**

# *PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT ON AMERICAN NEUTRALITY*

On September 3, 1939, the day that Britain and France declared war on Germany, President Roosevelt broadcast an address to the people of the United States on the subject of neutrality. He followed this up on September 21 by a speech to Congress appealing for the lifting of the Arms Embargo contained in the Neutrality Statutes. American neutrality is the subject of a special Chapter (see page 47).

BROADCAST TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, SEPTEMBER 3:

IT seems clear, even at the outbreak of this great war, that the influence of America should be consistent in seeking for humanity a final peace which will eliminate as far as possible the continued use of force.

Passionately though we may desire detachment, we are forced to realize that every word coming through the air, every ship at sea, every battle fought, affects the American future.

Let no man or woman thoughtlessly or falsely talk of America sending its armies to European fields.

A proclamation of American neutrality is being prepared at this moment [issued September 5]. This would have been done even if there had been no statute, because such proclamation is in accordance with international and American policy. I trust that our neutrality can be made a true neutrality.

I cannot prophesy the immediate economic effect of this new war on our nation, but I do say that no American has the moral right to profiteer at the expense of his fellow citizens or of the men, women and children living and dying in the midst of war in Europe.

Most of us in the United States believe in spiritual values. Most of us, regardless of what church we belong to, believe in the spirit of the New Testament—that great teaching which opposes itself to the use of armed force, of marching armies, of falling bombs.

The overwhelming masses of our people seek peace—peace at home, and the kind of peace in other lands which will not jeopardize peace at home.

This nation will remain a neutral nation, but cannot ask that every American remain neutral in thought as well. Even a neutral has the right to take account of the facts: even a neutral cannot be asked to close his mind or his conscience.

I have said, not once but many times, that I have seen war, that I hate war. I say again that so long as it remains within my power to prevent it, there will be no black-out of peace in the United States.

ADDRESS TO CONGRESS, SEPTEMBER 21:

I HAVE asked the Congress to reassemble in extraordinary session in order that it may consider and act on the amendment of certain legislation which in my fast judgement so alters the historic foreign policy of the United States that it impairs the peaceful relationship of the United States with foreign nations.

At the outset I proceed on the assumption that every member of the Senate and of the House of Representatives and every member of the executive branch of the Government, including the President and his associates, personally and officially, are equally and without reservation in favour of such measures as will protect the neutrality, the safety and the integrity of our country, and at the same time keep us out of war. . . .

The executive branch of the Government did its utmost, within our traditional policy of non-involvement, to aid in averting the present appalling war. Having thus striven, and failed, this Government must lose no time or effort to keep our nation from being drawn in. In my candid judgement we shall succeed in these efforts.

WE are proud of the historical efforts of the United States and of all the Americas during all these years, because we have thrown every ounce of our influence for peace into the scale of peace.

There has been sufficient realism in the United States to see how close to our own shores came the dangerous paths which were being followed on other continents.

Last January I told the Congress that a war which threatened to envelop the world in flames had been averted, but it had become increasingly clear that peace is not assured.

As late as the end of July I spoke to members of the Congress about the definite possibility of war—I should have called it the probability of war. And last January also, I spoke to this Congress of the need for further warning of new threats of conquest, military and economic, a challenge to religion, to democracy, and to international good faith.

I said an ordering of society which relegates religion, democracy and good faith among nations to the background can find no place within it for the ideals of the Prince of Peace. The United States rejects such an ordering and retains its ancient faith.

And I said we know what might happen to us of the United States if the philosophers of force were to encompass the other continents and invade our own. We, no more than other nations, can afford to be surrounded by the enemies of our faith and our humanity.

Last January I also said, We have learned that when we deliberately try to legislate neutrality, our neutrality laws may operate unevenly and unfairly, may actually give aid to an aggressor and deny it to the victim. The instinct of self-preservation should warn us that we ought not to let that happen any more.

## Embargo Provisions Dangerous to Neutrality

THE so-called Neutrality Act of 1935 was continued in force by the joint resolution of May 1, 1937, despite grave doubts expressed as to its wisdom by many senators and representatives and by officials charged with the conduct of our foreign relations, including myself.

I regret that the Congress passed that Act. I regret equally that I signed that Act.

On July 14 of this year I asked the Congress in the cause of peace and in the interests of real American neutrality and security to take action to change that Act.

I now ask again that such action be taken in respect to that part of the Act which is wholly inconsistent with ancient precepts of the laws of nations—the embargo provisions. I ask it because they are, in my opinion, most vitally dangerous to American neutrality, American security, and, above all, American peace.

These embargo provisions as they exist today prevent the sale to a belligerent by an American factory of any completed implements of war. But they allow the sale of many types of uncompleted implements of war, as well as all kinds of general materials and supplies.

They furthermore allow such products of industry and agriculture to be taken in American-flagged ships to belligerent nations. There, in itself, under the present law, lies definite danger to our neutrality and our peace.

From a purely material point of view what is the advantage to us of sending all manner of articles across the ocean for final processing there, when we could give employment to thousands by doing it here? . . .

I SEEK a great consistency—a greater consistency through the repeal of the embargo provisions and a return to international law. I seek re-enactment of the historical and traditional American policy.

It has been erroneously said that a return to that policy might bring us nearer war. I give to you my deep and unalterable conviction, based on years of experience as a worker in the field of international peace, that by the repeal of the embargo the United States will more probably remain at peace than if the law remains as it stands today.

I say this because, with the repeal of the embargo, this Government clearly and definitely will insist that American citizens and American ships keep away from the immediate perils of the actual zones of conflict. . . .

These perilous days demand co-operation of Congress without a trace of partisanship. Our acts must be guided by one single hard-headed thought—keeping America out of this war. . . .

Chapter 13

# THE NEUTRAL COUNTRIES IN THE FIRST PHASE OF THE WAR

*Reactions to British Blockade—Position of Sweden—Denmark's Danger—Finland's Export Trade Paralysed—The Aaland Islands—Soviet Pressure on Baltic States—Precautions in Belgium and Holland—Switzerland's Firm Measures—Anti-German Feeling in Hungary—Rumania's Problems—Italy's 'Watchful Waiting'—Spain's Attitude—Turkey and the Dardanelles*

THE outbreak of war was greeted with declarations of neutrality by most of the non-belligerents in Europe. Nevertheless, the activities of the belligerents had far-reaching economic effects on neutrals, especially as regards their export and import trade.

Whatever their sympathies—and Germany's wanton aggression against Poland did not fail to impress them with the justice of the Allies' cause—all the neutral countries were intent to maintain, as far as possible, their normal trade with the belligerents.

The British blockade, resulting in long delays for search purposes to neutral ships, caused irritation in maritime countries such as Holland, Sweden, and Norway. Germany's indiscriminate mine-laying and U-boat action against neutral ships speedily sent freight rates soaring (largely owing to increased insurance premiums), resulting in a rise in the cost of living in neutral countries and scarcity of many commodities.

Sweden was one of the first to suffer. In normal times about one quarter of her exports went to Germany, and between one-quarter and one-fifth to Britain. Among her exports to Germany in 1938 were 9,000,000 tons of high-grade iron ore, an essential to war industries. From the outbreak of war Britain declared iron ore to be contraband, and the blockade of the Norwegian coast, via which the greater part of Swedish ore was shipped to Germany through the Norwegian port of Narvik, deprived Germany of two-thirds of her normal iron ore imports from Sweden.

Britain's endeavours to prevent petrol reaching Germany via neutral countries also resulted in delay to Swedish tankers and a petrol shortage in Sweden. In most Scandinavian countries restrictions were imposed on private car users, while efforts were made to substitute natural gas for petrol.

But these hardships, with resulting unemployment and dislocation of industry, were slight compared with Sweden's sufferings at the hands of Germany. Unable, after a few initial successes, to interfere greatly with the shipping of Britain and France, Germany turned her attention to the neutrals. In the third week of the war there were sunk the Swedish ships "Silesia" (1,839 tons) and "Gertrud Bratt" (1,500 tons); while two Finnish ships, the "Walma" and "Marti Ragnar," carrying wood pulp cargoes, met their doom by U-boat.

Sweden reinforced her coastal defences, ordered her ships to keep to territorial waters, and took steps with the German Government to regulate the position—without, however, receiving great satisfaction. Resentment was so widespread at the indiscriminate sinkings that there was some talk of banning altogether shipments of Swedish iron ore to Germany; but, largely owing to Sweden's geographical situation and the fact that German mine-belts around the exits and entrances to the Baltic necessitated the employment of German pilots for navigation, the Swedish Government decided to hold its hand. Meanwhile the dispatch of trade commissions to Britain and Germany was under discussion.

Denmark's dangerous situation was brought home to her with a shock on the evening of September 4, when a 'plane, flying at a great height, dropped



*Photo, Keystone*

**NEUTRALITY PROCLAIMED BY SWEDEN'S KING**

**At the outbreak of the war the Scandinavian powers immediately proclaimed their neutrality. Above, King Gustav of Sweden is seen at a special assembly of the Swedish Parliament in Stockholm, announcing his country's attitude towards the conflict. The Scandinavian powers gave strong support to every attempt at mediation.**

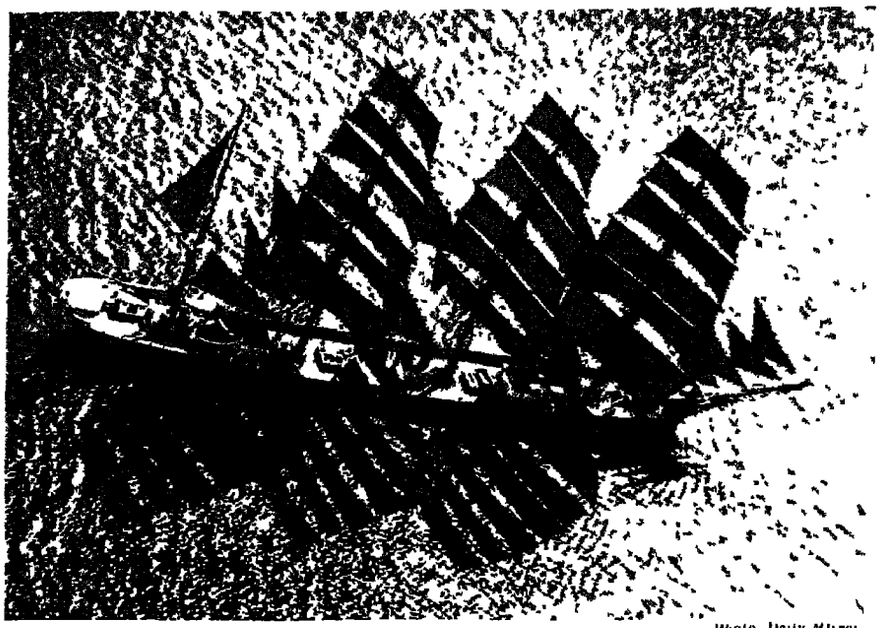


Photo Daily Mirror

NEUTRAL VICTIM OF A GERMAN MINE

As related in this Chapter, neutral shipping was not respected by the Germans once war had been declared, and one of the earliest victims was the Finnish sailing ship " Olivebank " (above), *which was sunk by a mine. One of the few surviving windjammers, she was British-built and* had spent her early years under the British flag

three bombs on Esbjerg. A house was completely wrecked, two people being killed and two injured. The aeroplane was later proved to have been a British warplane, which had intended the bombs for a German naval objective, and Denmark expressed her satisfaction with the handsome compensation and apologies tendered by the British Government.

Three days after the Esbjerg incident the crew of four of the Danish fishing boat " Nordstrand " perished when their ship struck a mine.

To prevent the repetition of air incidents, Denmark arranged for the nationality of her territory to be clearly indicated - during day-time, especially in the neighbourhood of the German frontier, while the territorial indications were flood-lit at night. At the same time the active air defence of South Jutland towns, to prevent foreign military aeroplanes passing over Danish territory, was ordered by the Defence Minister, and arrangements were completed for the evacuation, if necessary, of 180,000 people from Copenhagen.

Denmark's non-aggression pact with Germany, whereby Germany agreed to respect Danish neutrality so long as it was respected by other Powers, was referred to by M. Stauning, the veteran Danish Premier, when he declared that Denmark would observe strict neutrality. Stauning expressed the hope that German-Danish commerce would continue normally; but a week after the war began Copenhagen harbour was choked with Danish and foreign ships, and Denmark's losses were running into thousands of pounds daily.

Finland was affected by hostilities to a larger degree than any of the other four Northern countries. Her main trade was with Britain, and German control of the Baltic entrances speedily resulted in the sinking of Finnish ships and the paralysis of Finland's export trade. A still further worsening of her economic position came with a Soviet ban on the use of the River Neva by Finnish ships. Although Russia grounded her action on " defensive needs," its effect was to cut Finland's alternative route to Western Europe, via the River Neva and the Stalin Canal to the ice-free port of Murmansk.

Newly-laid Russian minefields in the eastern part of the Gulf of Finland further impeded Finnish shipping. Finland's President, Dr. Kallio, issued a decree prohibiting the warships of belligerent Powers from entering the territorial waters of the Aaland Islands. This was in fulfilment of the 1921 International Convention, whereby Finland in the event of war in the Baltic was required to take preliminary steps to defend the neutrality of the islands until the League of Nations decided what measures to take.

Fortification of the chief of the 6,500 islands of the Aaland group, lying between Finland and Sweden, had been opposed consistently by Soviet Russia, although Finland considered their fortification essential to her independence. The islands control not only the entrance to the Gulf of Finland, but also Finland's main railways along the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia and the entrance to the Gulf of Bothnia itself.



Photo, Associated Press

WHEN THE BALTIC STATES TRUSTED GERMANY

As late as June, 1939, a pact of non-aggression was signed at the ceremony pictured above, between von Ribbentrop for Germany (centre), Wilhelm Munters, Latvian Foreign Minister (left), and Kaarel Selters, Estonian Foreign Minister (right). Three months later the balance of power in the Baltic shifted, and the small neutrals signed a similar agreement with the U.S.S.R.



*Photo, Associated Press*

**LITHUANIA'S HOPE—AND HER FEAR**

**Lithuania was at first alarmed by the Russian invasion of Poland, so close to her own borders, but she soon became reconciled to it by the hope that her ancient capital of Vilna, seized by the Poles in 1920, would be returned to her. This photograph shows Russian troops entering Vilna in September, 1939; a month later a Soviet-Lithuanian non-aggression pact was signed, and the town was handed back to Lithuania.**

The Baltic States—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—also suffered severely through shipping hindrances, as in each case Britain was one of their best customers. Estonia, the most exposed strategically, was involved in the added complication of a Polish submarine incident. The Polish submarine "Orzel," which, with its crew in an exhausted condition, arrived and was interned in Tallinn harbour, made its escape, overpowering the two Estonian guards on board, who were released later near the Swedish coast.

Russia who, by her march into Poland, would have good cause to fear the enmity of the Poles, sent her fleet steaming into the Baltic, ostensibly to search for the submarine and safeguard Russian shipping. The Soviet Press also reported the torpedoing of a Russian cargo ship off the Estonian coast, and a contemplated blockade of Estonia was rumoured. Neither of these reports was confirmed, however, and conjectures that Russia intended exerting pressure on Estonia for totally different reasons were substantiated when, on September 24, M. Kaarel Selters arrived in Moscow in response to a hurried invitation from the Soviet Government, and within 24 hours left again, to consult with his Government.

Russia's march into Poland caused consternation in Lithuania, the most southerly of the Baltic States. Preparations for the evacuation of Kaunas, the capital, were pushed forward, but as Russian troops kept their distance from the Lithuanian frontier, and in some cases even fraternized with Lithuanian frontier guards, apprehension turned to hope that Russia's intervention in Poland would be a blessing in disguise and would result in the restoration of Vilna to Lithuania. The seizure of Vilna by the Poles in 1920 had embittered Lithuanian-Polish relations, and although Lithuania had latterly ceased to press actively for the return of Vilna, the question was not forgotten but had been relegated temporarily to the background.

Belgium, who on the outbreak of war had declared her neutrality and banned the supply of arms and munitions to the belligerent nations, took steps to ensure that her independence would be respected. On the morning of Monday, September 4, King Leopold announced: "From today I have taken over command of the army. I am certain that in all circumstances the army will know how to show itself worthy of the confidence which the whole nation places in it." Certain additional classes were mobilized; the frontier defences near Liége and key-points in the water-defence system between the Meuse and the Dutch and German borders were fully manned.

**Belgium Maintains Neutrality**

Brussels was the source of persistent rumours in the early days of the war that King Leopold with Queen Wilhelmina of Holland (possibly with the support of Signor Mussolini and the Pope) would seek to re-establish peace by an international conference. As Germany and France got to grips, however, these hopes faded and Belgium settled down to wartime conditions. By intensifying her anti-aircraft defences Belgium was determined to give Germany no excuse for alleging that she could not maintain effective neutrality. A British bomber flying over Belgian territory was chased by two Belgian fighter 'planes and forced to land, the crew of five being interned. Some indignation was caused by the unfortunate action of another British 'plane which, mistaking the challenge replied with machine-gun fire

**MURDERED PREMIER**

As related in page 118 M Armand Calinescu the Rumanian Prime Minister was assassinated in Bucharest on September 21 1939, by members of the Fascist Iron Guard His body is seen (right) lying in state

Photo Wide World Photos



Photo Keystone

**FLEEING TO SAFETY IN A NEUTRAL LAND**

As soon as the German armies began their invasion of Poland, thousands of Polish people fled across the border into Rumania Some of these refugees are here seen on a hastily constructed raft, which took them by river into the Moldavia district

summons by signals and rockets to land A Belgian aeroplane was destroyed, although the crew escaped by parachute

To afford no excuse to foreign airmen an order was given that all Belgian towns were to maintain usual street lighting throughout the night, while a big letter "B" in white canvas was ordered to be laid on the ground between Belgian and German frontier villages Belgians generally were in sympathy with the Allies, and M Max, the stalwart Brussels Burgomaster of Great War fame, was loudly cheered in the Belgian Parliament when he declared that history would condemn those who had provoked the war.

Similar frontier precautions were taken by Holland Arrangements to flood certain parts of the country in time of emergency were overhauled, and the mined bridges and trees across frontier roads with Germany were replaced by three distinct lines of defensive works All signposts and direction indicators at cross roads near the German frontier were removed Dutch anti aircraft guns were in action on more than one occasion against unidentified foreign aircraft Dutch fighters hotly pursued a German aeroplane which was flying over Gelderland, and a German naval aircraft which landed near the island of Ameland was confiscated and its crew interned

A Dutch minesweeper, "Willem van Ewick," was sunk with the loss of several lives by what is believed to have been a German mine The Dutch authorities announced that in order to protect their neutrality they were laying mines between their North Sea islands and the Dutch coast

More anxious than the position of either Belgium or Holland was that of Luxemburg This little country, about the size of Dorset, assumed growing importance as the difficulties of frontal assaults on the Siegfried Line by the French, or the Maginot Line by the Germans, became ever more apparent

Luxemburg, with no defences and an army of 500 men, whose territory is flanked by the formidable French and German defence lines, would be in no position to resist an invader, but life went on as usual, and Luxemburg's delegate duly attended the Oslo Powers' conference

Switzerland's determination to maintain her neutrality was emphasized by three measures a ban on the export of arms and ammunition, prohibition of the organization of propaganda or any other service in favour of any belligerent, and the appointment of Colonel Guisan to be Commander-in-Chief of the Swiss Army for the period of the emergency Colonel Guisan had started his career as a private and had served in every branch of the army.

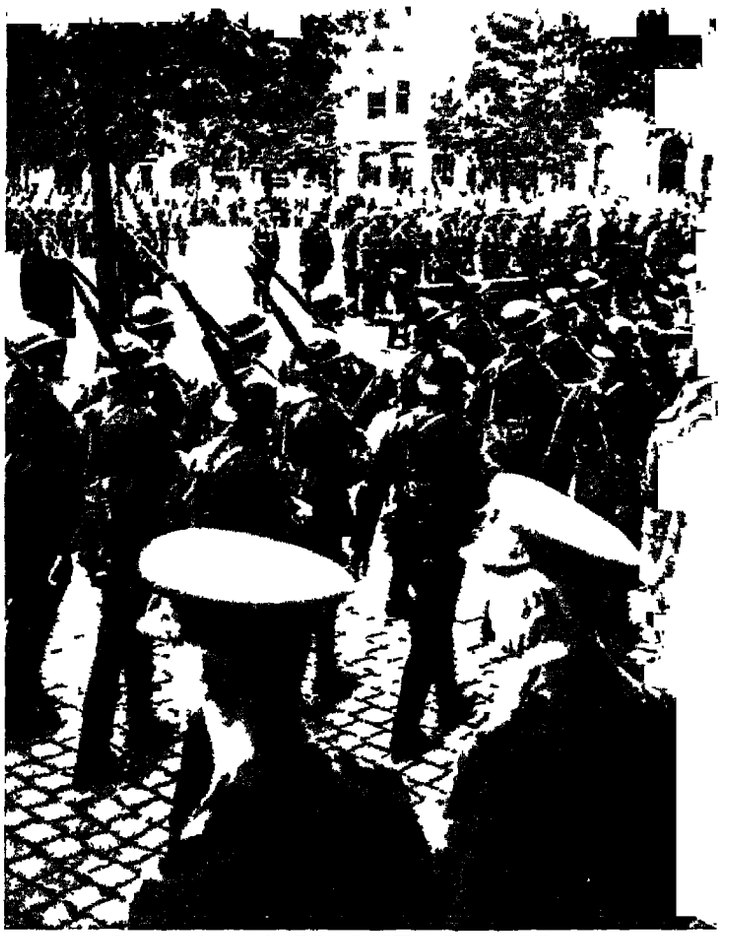
**The Swiss Take Action**

Almost at the same time the Swiss Federal Council decided to mobilize the entire army all officers, non commissioned officers and other ranks were ordered to collect at their depots Swiss subjects in the United Kingdom were among those affected by the order Within two weeks of the outbreak of war arrangements had been made to enrol every able-bodied man and woman in Switzerland between the ages of 16 and 65 for compulsory A R P and other defence work The principal hotels along the frontier were converted into hospitals, while buses ceased to run

The Swiss authorities were determined that their country should not become a base for belligerent espionage, as it was during the Great War, and a stringent round up of suspects took place in the chief cities

For the first fortnight the attitude of Italy to the conflict was watched with anxiety, but as she showed no signs of becoming involved, precautions on the Swiss Italian frontier were somewhat relaxed, on the other hand, large bodies of troops were sent to Eastern Switzerland Switzerland envisaged as her gravest danger the possibility of









## GERMANY'S NEIGHBOURS PREPARE

Despite their avowed neutrality, the countries bordering on Germany were forced to adopt defensive measures in face of the Nazi policy of ruthless aggression Top left, a frontier bridge between Germany and Luxemburg, note the barricaded windows and the waterway blocked with timber Top right, King Leopold of the Belgians reviewing his troops Left, Holland prepares to flood her dikes in case of invasion Below mobilized Swiss soldiers at Berne

*Photos Wide World Planet News Associated Press*



General Ismet Inonu, former Premier of Turkey and collaborator of Kemal Ataturk, was elected President by the Grand National Assembly on Ataturk's death



Dr Reyfik Saydam, who had previously been Minister of Health and Minister of the Interior, became Prime Minister of Turkey in January, 1939



**TURKEY'S LEADERS**

Shukri Sarajoglu, Turkish Foreign Minister, was responsible for the negotiation of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance between France, Great Britain and Turkey.

*Photos, Keystone; Wide World*

a German movement to turn the right wing of the French armies by an advance through Swiss territory via Basle and the valley of the Birs. She was not reassured by a speech made in Berlin by Dr Goebbels, who failed to mention Switzerland when announcing that Germany would not violate the territory of Belgium and Holland.

Swiss newspapers left no doubt as to their sympathies in the war. Almost unanimously the newspapers fastened the war guilt on one person, although in view of Government injunctions the name of that person was never mentioned. The German-Soviet Pact played a large part in determining the sympathy of the bankers and industrialists, who had looked upon Hitler as an anti-Bolshevik champion for the Allied cause

The attitude of the Hungarian people —as distinct from the Government— underwent considerable modification in the first weeks of the war. The Government affirmed on the outbreak that its attitude had not undergone the least change The brutality accompanying the German invasion of Poland, however, worked a subtle transformation in this attitude; Hungarian inhabitants of Huszt and other places in Ruthenia, which was occupied by Hungary at the time of the Munich settlement, demonstrated against Germany. Traditionally anti-Bolshevik, the people received with indignation news of the Russian invasion of neighbouring Poland, and Polish soldiers who fled into Hungary were received with extraordinary sympathy, in some cases being allowed even to retain their arms.

The growing anti-German feeling could not be overcome by German propaganda, which put forth its best efforts to convince Hungarians that the Franco-British military and naval operations were only a form of "face-saving," and not meant to help Poland at all. However, in view of Hungary's exposed position with regard to Germany, the mass of the nation welcomed the announcement of Count Teleki, the Hungarian Premier, on Thursday, September 14, that Hungary could not indulge in adventures. Hungary's policy, he said, was one of peaceful work—an aim which was being pursued by Italy, Yugo-Slavia, and other countries

In Rumania the outstanding event was the assassination at 1 p.m. on Thursday, September 21, of M. Calinescu, the Rumanian Prime Minister. Calinescu was one of the strongest men Rumania had produced. Although slightly built and handicapped by the loss of an eye in his youth—a defect which he concealed by always wearing a black monocle—Calinescu had earned the gratitude of King Carol and the enmity of the Nazi Iron Guard organization for his ruthless suppression of the latter's activities.

As the Premier's motor-car was travelling down the avenue from the Royal Palace of Cotrocemi, near Bucharest, the chauffeur saw his way obstructed by a cart on the side of the road The car skidded, hit the kerb and swung across the road. At that moment ten or eleven Iron Guard partisans opened fire with automatic pistols from both sides of the road The Premier was killed instantly.

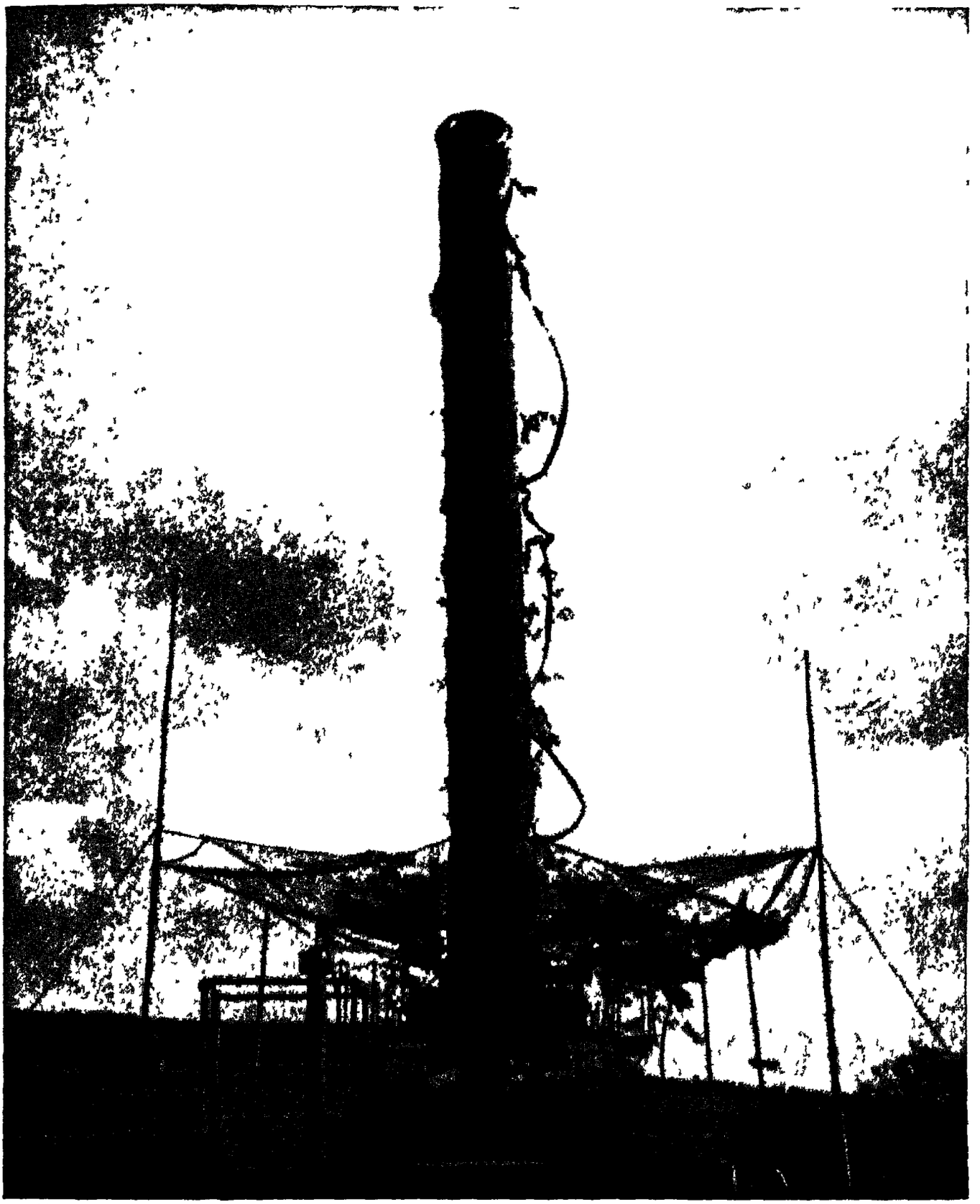
The assassination of Calinescu was followed by a ruthless purge in Rumania In many towns Iron Guards were rounded up and executed in public, and members of the party were outlawed. In some circles it was asserted that the murder had been planned by German Nazis months earlier, to coincide with a Nazi uprising in Rumania. If this were indeed the case, the presence of Soviet troops between Germany and the Rumanian frontier worked to Rumania's advantage.

**Exit the Iron Guard**

In Bucharest the Soviet entry into Poland aroused the gravest fears for the integrity of Rumania—especially for her province of Bessarabia, first seized by the Russians in 1812 and taken over from Russia by Rumanian troops after the collapse of the Tsarist Empire. These fears were not allayed even when the Soviet troops remained on the Polish side of the Rumanian frontier, and extensive Rumanian troop movements took place around Czernowitz. Three divisions were concentrated in the frontier area, while military pickets were established at the entrances and exits of all towns, and bridges were camouflaged

In spite of Rumania's declaration that she would remain neutral and maintain peaceful relations with all her neighbours, she took no chances; many classes were called to the colours, and Rumanians abroad who were liable for military service were ordered to return.

Germany's ruthless conquest of Poland aroused fear and horror in the hearts of all Rumanians—horror which was reinforced by the influx of refugees in a pitiable condition from Poland into Rumania. On Wednesday and Thursday, September 20 and 21, upwards of 20,000 Polish Jews trekked from Poland into Rumania, and soon, on the Rumanian-Polish frontier roads, there was an endless stream of women with their household belongings in knapsacks or on perambulators, homeless



*Photo, Central Press*

## DEALING DEATH ACROSS THE RHINE

**This is one of the French long-range guns which was in action near Strasbourg, hurling its heavy projectiles into German territory on the other side of the Rhine, in the neighbourhood of Kehl. Note how the gun has been carefully camouflaged with branches and netting, making it very difficult to locate from the air. The land war between Germany and the Allies was confined, at the beginning, mainly to tremendous artillery duels between the opposing forces.**



Photo, Planet News

## SMOKE OF WAR OVER RAVAGED WARSAW

*Warsaw suffered heavily in air raids* from the outbreak of the war until the enforced capitulation of the Polish capital. The photograph above was taken just after an incendiary bomb had burst, and a clearly-defined smoke ring, such as nearly always occurs after the explosion of this type of bomb, is seen rising on the left. It will be noticed that as a precautionary measure several of the horses in the foreground have been turned round in their shafts to prevent the animals bolting.

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**POLES WENT INTO BATTLE BEARING A HEAVY BURDEN**

**The photograph above of Polish infantry attacking gives some idea of the heavy load these soldiers, in full war-kit, had to bear ; in addition to carrying a rifle and equipment, gas mask and steel helmet, each man is wearing a greatcoat and has his pack on his back. Most of Poland's army was recruited from the peasant classes, men inured to fatigue and capable of great feats of endurance.**

*Photo, René Zuber*



**EMPTY TRIUMPH IN EMPTY STREETS**

*On October 5, 1939 German troops made a "triumphal" entry into conquered Warsaw. But a triumphal march falls rather flat when there are no crowds to watch the martial progress and acclaim the victorious troops. As shown in the photograph above, troops lined the streets to keep back the crowds which failed to materialize!* Another photograph of the ceremony, showing Hitler taking the salute, is given in page 124.

*Photo, Associated Press*

children, footsore soldiers, and despairing Polish officers. These were soon followed by a large part of Poland's Air Force (some estimates say as many as 500 aircraft) and the members of the Polish Government, including President Moscicki, Marshal Smigly Rydz, the Commander-in-Chief, and Colonel Beck, the Foreign Minister.

The feeding and housing of refugees faced Rumania with an economic problem of the first magnitude, while the presence of the refugee Polish President and Ministers caused complications with Germany. Yielding to German pressure, Rumania finally interned the members of the Polish Government, although these by the ordinary rules of international law should not have been regarded as belligerents.

If Rumania suffered by the influx of refugees and the cutting (temporarily at least) of her rail communications with Poland and north-western Europe, she gained in increased prices for her agricultural products. Large-scale offers by British, French and Dutch merchants drove up the price of wheat and barley.

Yugoslavia, who is allied with Rumania, Greece and Turkey in the Balkan Entente, maintained her strict neutrality, although the sympathies of the populace were evidenced by demonstrations against Germans in Dalmatian coastal resorts.

Generally speaking, the attitude of countries around the Mediterranean basin was favourable to the Allied cause. The Rome-Berlin Axis failed to withstand the strain of international events in the first weeks of the conflagration. Hitler's statement on the invasion of Poland that he would not call for military aid from Italy evoked a response on the part of the Italian Cabinet which was tantamount to a declaration of strict neutrality. Partial black-outs in Italian towns were suspended; train services with France were restored; and Italy as a neutral began to reap the benefits of increased trade, especially in transatlantic passenger traffic.

**Peace in the Mediterranean**

*Castigation of the Allies in some* Italian newspapers was offset by respect for the French effort against the Siegfried Line in others. Italians overwhelmingly expressed their desire for peace. The Soviet invasion of Poland aroused grave misgivings in Italian Fascist circles, and there was widespread relief that Mussolini abstained from drastic decisions in a speech he made on Saturday, September 23. The Duce said that the situation was full of unknown threats, and that the spontaneous cry among the masses of authentic Italian peoples was: "Prepare in the military field in order to be ready for every eventuality; support every possible attempt for peace; work in watchful silence."

Meanwhile Italian diplomacy was busy in the Balkans (notably in Yugoslavia and Hungary), ostensibly for the formation of a neutral bloc capable of presenting a united front to further German or Russian penetration. The British Cabinet's declaration that Britain was preparing for a war of three years' duration impressed the Italians, who



**'NEUTRAL' DUCE**

**Signor Mussolini, seen above after opening an Art Exhibition in Rome in October, 1939, adopted a policy of "watchful waiting" upon the outbreak of war between Germany and the Allies. He had no desire to see his vast programme of social progress compromised by the strain of war.**

*Photo, Keystone*

at last began to realize that the Democracies were in earnest. It was interpreted as a favourable sign for the Allies that Mussolini should appoint a new Ambassador to London in the person of Signor Bastianini, hitherto Under-Secretary at the Italian Foreign Office. "Watchful waiting" might be said to epitomize Italy's attitude in the opening stages of the struggle. Her eyes were especially directed on Spain and Turkey.

In Spain, as in most neutral countries, the Russian invasion of Poland redounded to the advantage of the Allies. No more was heard of early broadcast appeals to localize the conflict; and expressions of indignation and disappointment that anti-Bolshevik Germany should ally herself with Bolshevik Russia were apparent on all sides. Some Spanish Fascist leaders declared that their cause had been betrayed, and that German aid in the Civil War had been given under false pretences. Restrictions began to be placed on German trading concerns.

On the outbreak of war the Turkish Cabinet sat in conference with Marshal Fevzi Chakmak, Chief of the Turkish General Staff. Their deliberations were followed by a personal message from President Inönü to King George, expressing the President's satisfaction at the bonds of friendship uniting Turkey and Britain. Turkey's control of the vital Dardanelles and her proximity to Russia behoved her to be cautious, but the Prime Minister, M. Saydam, accurately reflected Turkish feeling when he announced on September 11: "While there are no direct political divergencies with Germany, we have with Britain and France a community of interests, backed by determined bases, and our negotiations with them regarding agreements are being continued in the friendliest atmosphere."

**Turkey Stays Loyal**

It was generally felt that Turkey would honour her obligations with Britain as regards the maintenance of the freedom of the Dardanelles to Allied warships, and military collaboration in the event of aggression in the Mediterranean. Some apprehensions were felt, however, in London and Paris, when M. Sarajoglu, the Turkish Foreign Minister, left for Moscow on September 22 in response to an invitation from the Russian Government. In some quarters it was feared that Russia would endeavour to persuade Turkey to close the Dardanelles to Allied warships, thus depriving Britain of the opportunity to redeem her pledges to Rumania by direct aid, and ensuring to Russia freedom of communications in the Black Sea, so vital to Germany for receiving Russian supplies.

Portugal reaffirmed her alliance with Britain which, the Government stated, did not compel Portugal to abandon neutrality.

Perhaps the greatest neutral sufferer from the war was the Vatican, which lost contact with 24,000,000 Catholics in Poland, owing to the Russo-German partition. It was estimated that this event, and the impossibility of receiving contributions from Roman Catholics in Germany, had reduced the Papal income by 40 per cent.



## VICTORS AND VANQUISHED IN WARSAW

On October 5, little more than a month after the outbreak of war, Hitler made a ceremonial entry into Warsaw, and reviewed his troops at the Aleja Ujazdowskie, as shown below. While the Germans were marching into the city, remnants of Warsaw's garrison, some of whom are seen above after the capitulation, were still marching out as prisoners of war under German guard

*Photos, Planet News; Wide World*



Chapter 14

# POLISH TRAGEDY: WARSAW'S HEROIC SIEGE AND FALL

*Warsaw Awaits the Foe—Ruthless Air Bombing—Government Leaves the Capital—Czuma's 'Order of the Day' and Starzynski's Broadcast—A City in Agony—The Enemy Checked—Czuma Rejects German Ultimatum—Appeal to the Civilized World—First-line Fortresses Captured—Warsaw Capitulates—Fuehrer's Empty Triumph*

In the four hundred years that Warsaw has been the capital of Poland it has provided the historian with a subject for many a stirring page. In the seventeenth century it was besieged and captured and sacked by the Swedes, and in the eighteenth the Russians marched as conquerors through its streets. Then in the nineteenth it saw riot and insurrection and civil war and its gutters ran red with the blood of its slaughtered sons. In the Great War it was captured by the Germans, and even when peace had come to the rest of Europe Warsaw was still in the battle-line, for in 1920 the Red Army came very near its gates. Such was the history that Poland's capital city could look back on when in the late summer of 1939 it heard once again the tones and undertones of war. But this time there was a new note in the martial cacophony—the wail of warning sirens.

Right up to the outbreak of war, on that fateful September 1, Warsaw's people went calmly about their everyday business. They knew from their newspapers and the wireless that the political situation was dangerous, that Nazi Germany was displaying an ever more hostile and truculent mood. But they trusted in their government and more particularly in the trinity of Moscicki, Smigly Rydz, Beck—the men who had been trained by Pilsudski and were the inheritors of his prestige and power. Even on August 31, when the posters gave warning of a worsened situation, when through the radio came the message, "In case of war every man, whatever his age, and every woman will be soldiers," they retained their *sang-froid*. The cafés remained open and did good business—although all sales of alcohol were banned—and so too did most of the shops. When the order for mobilization was issued the men affected went quietly to their depots, and there were no demonstrations. Through the streets rumbled convoys of military transport, composed of every sort of vehicle from powerful motor-lorries to peasants' carts just requisitioned for the army. As dark fell there were some who looked a trifle anxiously at the sky, for hope of a peaceful solution of the dispute with the Reich was rapidly growing dim. And so came the last peaceful night the people of Warsaw were to enjoy for a month

At 5.30 the next morning the first German aeroplanes appeared above Katowice, and at 6.15 the air raid sirens in Warsaw sounded for the first time. Rubbing their eyes the early morning crowds looked up at the sky and gazed fascinated at the vanguard of the Nazi raiders as they darted and wheeled and dived. No bombs were dropped in that preliminary raid, but at 9 o'clock the second wave came over and this time their advent was accompanied by destruction and fires caused by the incendiary and explosive bombs they dropped. The Polish fighter 'planes went up at once and tackled the raiders and eventually drove them off. They were soon back again, and that first day Warsaw was raided five or six times. The worst raid was in the afternoon, when the crowds rushed from their homes to watch the aerial combat, and there were reports of several Nazi 'planes brought down.



**PROFESSOR AND PRESIDENT**

M. Ignacy Moscicki, a famous Polish chemist, was elected President of the Polish Republic in 1926, and re-elected in 1933 He resigned after his country had been overrun by Nazi and Soviet troops.

*Photo, Wide World*

Saturday had much the same story to tell. From dawn onwards wave after wave of raiders appeared above the city and a number of explosive bombs were dropped in the suburbs By the evening there were many casualties, and the air raid wardens had not so much difficulty as heretofore in persuading the people to take cover when the sirens blew. By now all the places of amusement were closed, and at nightfall the trams and buses moved through streets lit only by a few blue lights. Still there was no panic, no disorder. The citizens criss-crossed their windows with strips of paper to lessen the danger from splintering glass.

Sunday was marked by several raids, directed at the main road junctions and railways, and the next day two hundred people were killed in the eastern suburbs. A factory was destroyed, and considerable damage was done in many places Several warplanes were alleged to have been brought down, but still the raiders appeared, undeterred by their losses or by the hot reception given them by the Polish fighters and anti-aircraft defences.

Now there was discernible a marked change of mood in the populace. The war, they realized, was not going too well, for all the reports from the front had the same gist, telling of retreat and yet more retreat. Fists were shaken in impotent anger at the raiders, and hatred of the Nazis reached a fever pitch And to the anxious listeners' ears there came an ominous sound—the mutter of the invaders' guns only fifty miles away.

So near indeed were the Germans that on the Monday, September 4, the Polish Government resolved to remove the central administration to a place of safety in the east. The evacuation was completed by the afternoon of the next day, and the control of the city was vested in the Mayor, M. Starzynski and General Czuma, command

garrison. A message was broadcast from the Warsaw station asking all able-bodied citizens to report to the police headquarters and volunteer for digging trenches in the outskirts of the city, in readiness for the siege which by now was recognized as inevitable.

Now when the Nazi advanced troops were only thirty miles distant the capital was bombed with still greater frequency and ruthlessness. Some of the war-planes bombed and machine-gunned the Vistula bridges Explosions and fires were everywhere. One or two of the raiders were brought down by anti-aircraft fire, and the astounded citizens watched the airmen descending by parachute into the city's parks.

Just a week after the war began the German troops were reported by the Berlin wireless to be outside Warsaw.

**Anticipating the Triumph**

and at 5.15 p.m. on Friday, September 8, it was jubilantly announced that German motorized troops had forced their way into the city. Following the announcement the German anthem "Deutschland über Alles" and the Horst Wessel song were crashed into the microphone.

The claim was decidedly premature, however, for a few hours later the voice of the Warsaw radio was heard declaring that the city was still holding out. The bridges which the Germans had claimed were destroyed were all intact, as none of the bombs had reached its target; most of the shops had kept open, and the traffic in the streets was almost normal. On the outskirts of the city 120,000 citizens were working day and night digging trenches against the approach of the invaders.

At 10.30 in the evening General Czuma issued his first Order of the Day. "Soldiers of the Warsaw Garrison," it read, "the Commander-in-Chief has entrusted the defence of the capital to me. He demands that the enemy's advance shall break against the walls of Warsaw. We have occupied positions from which there is no retreat. At this outpost we must endure to the last soldier. The enemy must know that we shall meet him with the cry, 'Halt, thus far and no farther.' We shall fight to the last ditch." After he had read the Order the announcer proceeded. "I am speaking from the Polish wireless station, which may be struck by the enemy's blows at any moment. If our aerial suddenly becomes silent, it will be because it has been destroyed. In that case orders will be given by another means."

The situation was truly desperate. Actual fighting was going on only five miles from the city, and the citizens were left in no doubt that they were now in the battle-zone. Broadcasting on the Sunday evening, Colonel Lipinski, the Polish Military Observer, stated that the city had been bombed fifteen times that day between 5 a.m. and 10 p.m. Seventy German bombers, he went on, had appeared above the city, and fifteen of these had been shot down by the city's defences. The resolute Mayor of Warsaw also came to the microphone and expressed his people's confidence in their final victory. Morale was excellent, he declared, and but a few miles from the front line life was going on not much different from normal.

On the same evening the Germans repeated their trick of a couple of days before, and broadcast false news on the Warsaw wavelength. A programme was given out which purported to come from the beleaguered city. Fighting was going on all around him, said the announcer; and most impressive sound effects were employed to give verisimilitude to the deception. Soon after midnight a news bulletin was broadcast by the same station, and this told of German troops entering Warsaw and occupying the waterworks, of the collapse of Polish resistance, and other incidents equally untrue.

So far, indeed, was Warsaw from surrendering that the advance of the invaders had received a definite check before its barricades.

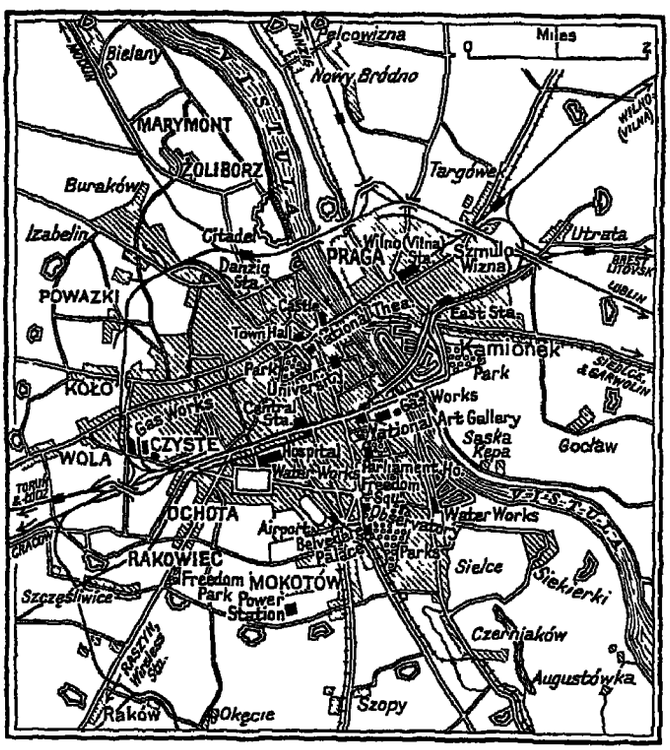
**Check to Besiegers**

On each side the Nazis had pushed far beyond the city to the east, but they fully realized the danger of leaving so powerful a centre of resistance behind the line of advance.

On September 13 the air attacks were intensified—according to a German communiqué, "the civil population had been incited by radio, leaflets, and other proclamations to wage guerilla war"—and many houses and tenements were destroyed, burying in their ruins a large number of civilians. At the same time fierce attacks were made on the Polish soldiers holding the trenches before the city. All were beaten off.

Much the same incidents of bloody war filled the hours of the next few days. Still the city held out; still its guns roared defiance and the same defiant spirit animated its soldiers and its citizens as shoulder to shoulder they met the German onset.

At length the attackers resolved to compel surrender by the threat of unrestrained bombardment. On Sept. 16 a German envoy was dispatched to Warsaw with an ultimatum, and although General Czuma refused to receive him, the terms of the document were broadcast in Polish from the German Deutschlandsender station, and leaflets giving the same information were showered down on the city by Nazi 'planes. The text of the ultimatum required: (1) that the city should be surrendered without further fighting within twelve hours to the German troops who had surrounded it; (2) in the same period the Polish troops must surrender to the German commanders; (3) in the event of the ultimatum being accepted, then the nearest German commander must be informed; (4) but if it were rejected, then the German army would be prepared to give the civilian population




THE VALIANT CITY

On this map of Warsaw are marked the principal buildings, many of which were either destroyed or badly damaged by shell and bomb during the month of September, 1939. When the siege was over, there was hardly a building that did not bear the scars of war.

*Based upon a map by "The Times"*

twelve hours to leave the city by the road to Siedlce and Garwolin. After that Warsaw would be regarded as a theatre of war and must take all the consequences. "This," concluded the ultimatum, "is the last warning to the Polish military commander. He alone will bear the responsibility for the blood of innocent citizens which may flow, and for the destruction of the city."

Faced by the threat to lay waste their city, the Warsaw authorities might well have felt that the hour had come to negotiate surrender, particularly in view of the fact that the Russian intervention had just begun and the Polish armies in the field were rapidly disintegrating. Still Starzynski and Czuma were obdurate, however. They saw Warsaw as the saviour of Poland's honour, and it was resolved to hold out until the last man if necessary.





**THEY HELD WARSAW**

**M. Stefan Starzynski (above), who served with the Polish Legions during the war of 1914–18, was elected Mayor of Warsaw in 1937. General Czuma (below) was in command of the garrison of Warsaw. After the departure of Marshal Smigly Rydz and the General Staff, he was personally responsible for the defence of the city.**

*Photos, Wide World*



**MAN'S HANDIWORK DESTROYED BY MAN**

**The devastating effect of high-explosive bombs is shown in this view of air-raid damage in Warsaw, taken through a hole made by such a bomb. The havoc wrought by the incessant Nazi air attacks on Warsaw was tragic, and an uncounted host of civilians lost their lives.**

*Photo, Associated Press*

The twelve hours' grace went by, and the bombardment of the city by German 'planes and artillery proceeded. On the night of Tuesday, September 19, the Mayor broadcast an appeal for assistance to the peoples of the civilized world. "I have seen women and children being killed in the streets while waiting in queues to buy necessities," he said; "I have seen the dead lying about unattended." Then he went on to give the most moving account of the destruction of "our beloved Warsaw." "I saw the National Art Gallery of Warsaw, treasuring the most famous Polish works of art and of foreign masters, also in ruins. But I have beheld the immeasurable heroism of the citizens and soldiers of this town fighting for the freedom of our country and freedom of our souls. These Polish men, women and children are not dying in vain; they are dying not only for the freedom of their own country but for the freedom of Europe. We know that our friends want to help us. Our lives may be in danger now, but our souls are undisturbed. We shall fight to the last man if we have to go down fighting. We shall stand at our post imbued with holy faith in our ultimate victory even in this dark hour. The day will come...." Here the Mayor's voice broke.

Day after day the city's martyrdom continued. Yet another Sunday came round, and the agony was intensified. More than a hundred guns shelled the city unceasingly for twenty-four hours, yet in spite of the bombardment the faithful made their way to the churches as usual. And yet not quite as usual, for the road to church was strewn with the bodies of the wounded and the dead....

A thousand civilians, so it was estimated, had died during the night and day, and the number of injured was beyond compute. The besiegers were doing their utmost to break the people's morale, to paralyse the city's transport system, to destroy its water supply and all the necessities of civilized existence.

Reports reached the outside world that the enemy was using incendiary bombs on the shopping and theatre districts, and that amongst the buildings hit were four churches and three hospitals filled with wounded Poles and Nazi prisoners of war. Fires sprang up everywhere, and the people were unable to fight them effectively owing to the destruction of the water system and the danger of splinters and flying debris. Late on Sunday night the Warsaw Defence communiqué read that there were no longer any buildings in which there had not been victims or which remained intact. Most of the houses, and especially the public buildings, were in ruins.

One of the most vivid pictures of the besieged city was presented by a Polish pilot, Colonel Izycki, who succeeded in flying through the barrage of

German anti-aircraft shells and in eventually making his way to Hungary "From the air," he said, "the city is a horrible sight Hardly a building remains standing Big fires are left to burn themselves out Between the Germans and the defending forces there is a 'No-man's-land' strewn with dead men, women, and horses Food is scarce There is some life in the streets, but old people and children never leave the cellars where they have taken refuge No gas has been used during the siege, except occasional tear-gas charges against our artillery We captured a number of German tanks by throwing hand-grenades tied to bottles of petrol Sometimes there was some bitter hand to-hand fighting Some captured German soldiers had pamphlets predicting that Goebbels would address them by radio from London before Christmas"



POIGNANT SCENES IN POLAND'S CAPITAL

Here are two photographs which illustrate vividly the grim tragedy of bombarded Warsaw Above are two Orthodox Jews helping to dig trenches in the city's open spaces, while below a group of homeless Polish women and children have gathered at the Warsaw Opera House under the protecting eye of a Polish soldier

*Photos Julien Bryan*

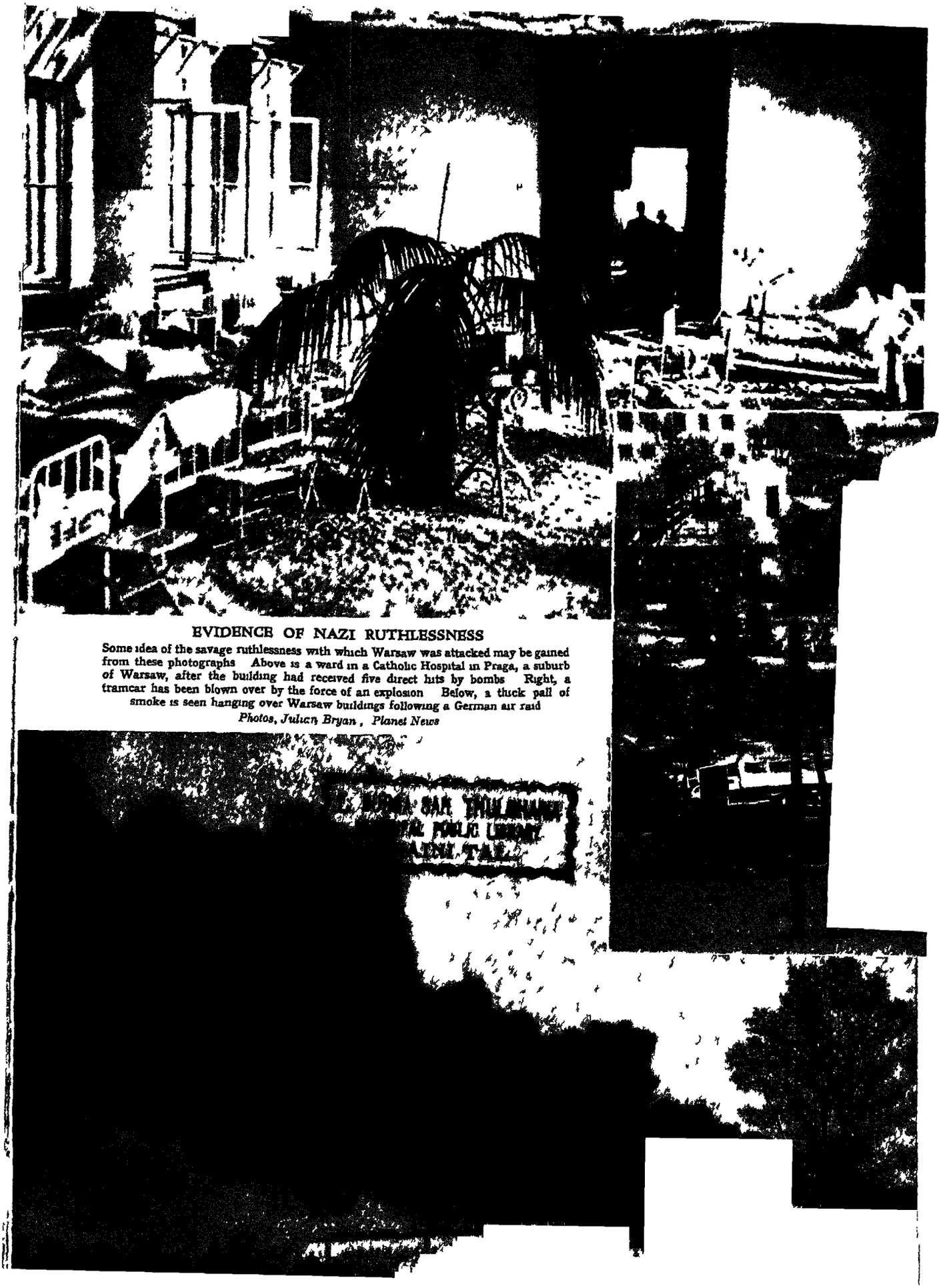


Still there was no thought of yielding, people and garrison were solid behind their leaders in the resolve to fight to the bitter end For three more days they suffered the agonies of the siege, but following the capture by the Germans of the first line of forts in the northern suburbs and the second line in the southern, the Poles could hold out no longer

**The Heroes Surrender**

And so from Warsaw on September 27 there came at last the message of surrender 'After twenty days of heroic defence," it read, "after practically the destruction of half of the city, and after the destruction of the waterworks, the electric plant and other public utility services, the military authorities have decided that these disasters, coupled with the lack of ammunition and the impossibility of obtaining early assistance from the Allies, make it futile to defend the city further, involving as it would the risk of pestilential diseases as well as the entire destruction of the city, the heroic defence of which will certainly pass into history An armistice has, therefore, been agreed upon since noon, and the conditions for the capitulation are being discussed at the present time The most honourable terms are being demanded by the Warsaw military authorities" Shortly afterwards the German High Command stated that the offer to surrender was unconditional and that the city would be handed over on the following Friday

The negotiations for the handing over of the city should be finished to morrow," read a communique issued by the Warsaw Defence Command on Thursday, September 28, and the announcement was followed by a final review of the situation which had made surrender inevitable "Fire having destroyed the food centres, the lack of food is being cruelly felt number of wounded 16,000 soldiers and 20,000 civilians impossible to establish exact number of dead and wounded several hospitals completely destroyed on a number of occasions wounded had to be moved from one place to another imminent threat of epidemics" Nevertheless despite the weeks of agony "the moral strength of the population remains unshakable The soldiers defending the capital remain doggedly at their posts They have shown themselves superior to the enemy wherever they have not been crushed by the superiority of technical means of fighting" One of the Mayor's last acts before the capitulation was the dispatch of a reply to the Mayor of Verdun, the French city which for so long, and in the end successfully, withstood in 1916 the



## EVIDENCE OF NAZI RUTHLESSNESS

Some idea of the savage ruthlessness with which Warsaw was attacked may be gained from these photographs Above is a ward in a Catholic Hospital in Praga, a suburb of Warsaw, after the building had received five direct hits by bombs Right, a tramcar has been blown over by the force of an explosion Below, a thick pall of smoke is seen hanging over Warsaw buildings following a German air raid

*Photos, Julian Bryan, Planet News*

whole weight of the German military machine. "I confidently hope," said M. Starzynski, "that the defence of Warsaw has played a useful part in this inhuman war forced upon the peoples of Europe by the German spirit of domination and barbarism."

Although it was stated that the city was to be handed over on the Friday, the first German troops did not make their entrance until Sunday, October 1, when the suburb of Praga on the right bank of the Vistula was occupied. In the next day or two they systematically extended their control over the city, and as methodically received the submission of the Polish units and took their arms from them. There were no hostile demonstrations—at least, on any considerable scale. The people, still dazed by their long and terrible ordeal, watched the conquerors goose-stepping through their streets—watched them in a deathlike calm. The Germans posted machine-guns and armoured cars at the most important points in case there was trouble, but they were not needed. The civilians kept their heads and refrained from any *franc-tireur* activities. The garrison, disarmed, marched out of the city towards the prison camps prepared for their reception in Poland or to forced labour in the German fields.

As soon as they had left, gangs of scavengers and demolition squads worked furiously to make the city presentable before the Fuehrer's coming. The roads were swept clean, debris piled in heaps in the side streets, damaged buildings in danger of collapse were blown up. In this work many of the citizens were compelled to join, and it was they, too, who were made to erase the patriotic inscriptions scribbled on walls and pavements and substitute others more acceptable to the conquering horde. Thus "Death to the invaders!" gave place to "Death to Poland!"

Even so, the smoke was still rising from the ruins when Herr Hitler made his triumphal entry on October 5. He travelled by air from Berlin, and he was met at the Warsaw airport by many of the officers of the Nazi High Command, including General von Brauchitsch, the Commander-in-Chief, General Keitel, and, not least, Himmler, the Gestapo chief, who for some days had been supervising a clean-up of all the dangerous and suspicious elements in the city.

After inspecting the guard of honour the Fuehrer drove at speed to the Plac Wolnosci, situated in the diplomatic quarter near the new headquarters of the General Staff. There it had been arranged to hold the triumphal parade, no doubt because it was in a district which had escaped, more than most, devastation from the Nazi bombs and shells. It is hardly likely that anyone informed Hitler that he was holding his review in "Freedom Square."

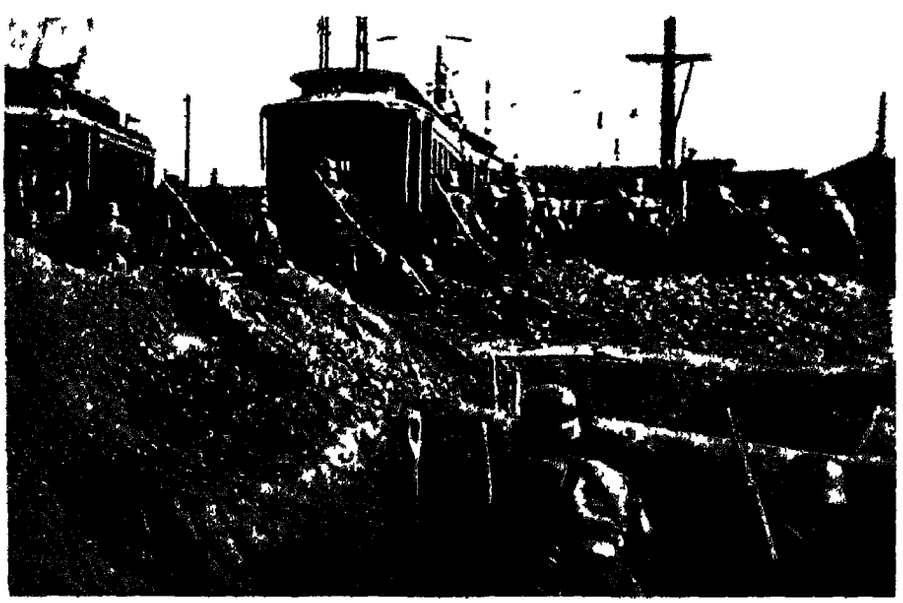
Nothing was allowed to mar the pageantry of the occasion. Watched by a handful of citizens, the grey-green legions tramped through the square and the neighbouring streets, decorated and garlanded in honour of their triumph. A few hours later the Fuehrer stepped into his 'plane and left the scarred and smoke-blackened shell of the city that had dared to resist the progress of his imperialistic march. He was in a hurry to issue his Order of the Day expatiating on the achievements of the armies of the Reich. He left behind him in Warsaw a population subdued but not cowed. However much Hitler might boast of "a combat in keeping with the best traditions of the German soldiery," it was Warsaw that claimed and received the sympathy and admiration of the world.

**The Empty 'Triumph'**



**CITY'S FATE SEALED IN A BUS** *Associated Press*

**After three weeks of heroic defence, faced with the destruction of large parts of the city, and of the waterworks, electric plant and other public utility services, and lacking further supplies of ammunition, the military authorities of Warsaw were obliged to surrender. Above, negotiations for the surrender of the city are taking place inside a German army bus. General Blaskowitz, German negotiator, is second from left.**



**ROADSIDE ENTRENCHMENTS**

**Above are German infantry entrenched on the outskirts of Warsaw during the siege of the city. Whether they were able to make use of the trams is doubtful, at least during the later days of the siege, for Warsaw's electric supply was put out of action by shell and bomb.**

***Photo, Wide World***

## *Historic Documents. XXVI*

# *WAR MINISTER DESCRIBES BRITAIN'S NEW ARMY*

On October 11, 1939, Mr. Hore-Belisha, Secretary of State for War, made a statement in the House of Commons on the work of the British Expeditionary Force in France. We give here the latter part of his speech, in which he outlined the expansion of our peacetime army into the great fighting machine of today.

WE have a numerous Army. In that respect we are at the outset of hostilities better situated than we were in 1914. We had in peacetime taken a precaution, for which we must now be thankful, of instituting a system of universal military training, and thus the even flow of recruits became as well assured to us as to the Continental countries. We had the foundation on which, after the declaration of war, we could build an even more comprehensive system and we passed the National Service Act, placing under an *obligation to serve all male British citizens resident in Great* Britain between the ages of 18 and 41.

In peacetime also we had doubled the Territorial Field Army. Altogether we had at the disposal of the Army in this country alone, including the Reservists and the Militia, the best part of 1,000,000 men, on whom we could call at the outbreak of war. Never had the total of our armed forces in the United Kingdom approached anywhere near such a total in time of peace.

When I first introduced Army Estimates to the House in March, 1938, we were preparing out of our strategic reserve five divisions—none of them upon a Continental scale. By the time of the next Army Estimates, in March this year, the Government had decided, in view of menacing developments, to prepare 19 divisions—all upon a Continental scale. Subsequently the European tension increased, and in April the plan for 19 divisions became a plan for 32. This will not be the limit of our effort.

It is plain that great calls will be made upon our man power. How do we intend to proceed?

In the first place we have the method of calling up classes. His Majesty has already proclaimed the classes between 20 and 22. Those within the classes proclaimed are being called up in batches, and with each batch we are taking an additional quota of volunteers. Any man desirous of being a volunteer in the Army, and being above the age of the class called up, may register his name at either a recruiting station or a Ministry of Labour office and he will be treated in exactly the same way as the classes proclaimed.

The upper age limit for volunteers varies according to the purpose required. Tradesmen may be taken generally up to 45, non-tradesmen up to 38, and a limited number for certain employments up to the age of 55. We accept as volunteers, subject to the schedule of reserved occupations, any British subjects in the United Kingdom, and non-British subjects resident here if approved by the Home Office. Once registered, volunteers receive a notice, as do the militiamen, bidding them to attend a medical examination.

### Enthusiastic Volunteers of All Ages

I MAY say that since the beginning of the war we have taken into, or are in process of taking into, the Army nearly 50,000 volunteers. In the month of September it so happened that we took in twice as many volunteers as militiamen. The volunteers have been of all military ages, and this should dispose of the supposition that we are confining entry into the Army to young men of the first age groups.

The Government fully understand the enthusiasm which so fervently inspires the people of this country to serve in or with the fighting services, and they understand equally the determined motive which lies behind this zeal. All may register, and few who are fit and who are outside the scope of the reserved occupations will be disappointed as the war goes on and the expansion continues.

There is even greater inducement now than in previous wars to join the Army in the way described. Apart from specialist appointments, virtually all commissions will be given from the ranks. . . .

The look-out for talent is continuous, and all commanding officers are instructed to search for it. In this army the star is within every private soldier's reach. No one, however humble or exalted his birth, need be afraid that his military virtues will remain unrecognized.

More important, no one who wishes to serve in the Army need consider his status minimized by starting on the bottom rung of the ladder. From this source, then—from the ranks—we shall mainly derive our junior officers.

For officers in the middle piece and for specialists we have other sources open to us. We have the Regular Army Reserve. We have the Territorial Reserve of Officers, and we also have the Army Officers' Emergency Reserve, which is a register on which anyone with military or specialized experience can put his name. We have, in the last six weeks, taken 2,000 officers from this register.

It will be necessary to remind the House that it is of the essence of reserves that they are not all used up at once, and upon the assumption that this will be a three years' war, many of those with suitable qualifications, who feel a natural impatience, will in due course have their opportunity. . . .

### Foundations of New Home Units

FURTHER openings for older men will be given in two new directions which I shall outline. We propose to form Home Defence Battalions. Each one of these will be a battalion of its county regiment and will be composed of officers and other ranks now serving in national Defence Companies; officers and other ranks found permanently unfit for service overseas; officers and other ranks awaiting drafting, and young soldiers not available by age for service in a theatre of operations. It will be possible for some of the older ex-officers who are seeking employment and some older men to be absorbed in these battalions.

We are also in process of forming an Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps to be organized in battalions which will take over military pioneer work, both overseas and here. It will not be composed of the men of earlier military age and all will be volunteers.

Pari passu with this pressure upon us to take men into the army is a pressure in the reverse direction. We have tried to deal liberally with industry, whose needs we fully recognize, just as industry will recognize that an army is a skilled profession, and must also, for the safety of the country, have men of specialized knowledge.

We have temporarily released about 10,000 Regular Reservists, and will have shortly, in addition, released 12,000 Territorials either temporarily or permanently. In so far as these releases are helping to accelerate and enlarge the output of our war industries, the loss will have been repaid to us. . . .

In 1914 appeals were made for recruits who had neither clothing, nor equipment, nor instructors, nor accommodation, and men were taken regardless of their civilian occupations. The feat of the first months of the last war we had already achieved in the months preceding this war, and experience had taught us to avoid many errors of the last occasion.

THUS at the beginning of September we had in being an army which was daily acquiring new strength, better cohesion, and greater efficiency. It has been a privilege to speak of it today, and to reveal that, while the world was reading of the German advances into Poland, British soldiers, resolved to rectify this wrong, were passing silently and in an unending sequence across the Channel into France. There we may think of them in their positions along a country-side whose towns, whose villages and whose rivers are as familiar to them by memory or by tradition as their own.

How strange it is that twice in a generation men should take this journey, and that sons should be treading again upon a soil made sacred by their fathers. . . .

We may rest assured that they will acquit themselves with the same tenacity, courage and endurance. However long the struggle and however great the ordeal, they will, as our soldiers did before, take our arms and our cause of freedom to victory.



**C.-IN-C. AND HIS CHIEF OF STAFF**

General Viscount Gort, V.C. (above), Commander-in-Chief of the B.E.F., was, in the early days of the war of 1914-18, A.D.C. to Sir Douglas Haig. In 1917 he commanded the 4th Grenadier Guards. Below is his Chief of Staff, Lt.-Gen. H. R. Pownall, previously Director of Military Operations at the War Office.

*Photos, Russell; Hay Wrightson*



**O.C. FIRST CORPS**

General Sir John Dill (above), who was appointed to command the 1st Corps of the B.E.F., was, in 1936, General Officer Commanding in Palestine.

*Photo, Vandyk*



**2nd AND 3rd CORPS LEADERS**

Lt.-Gen. Alan F. Brooke, C.B., D.S.O. (above), commanding the 2nd Corps, B.E.F., went to France in 1914. Sir Ronald Adam, D.S.O., 3rd Corps Commander, was formerly Deputy C.I.G.S. He served on the Western Front and in Italy, 1914-1918.

*Photos, Bassano*

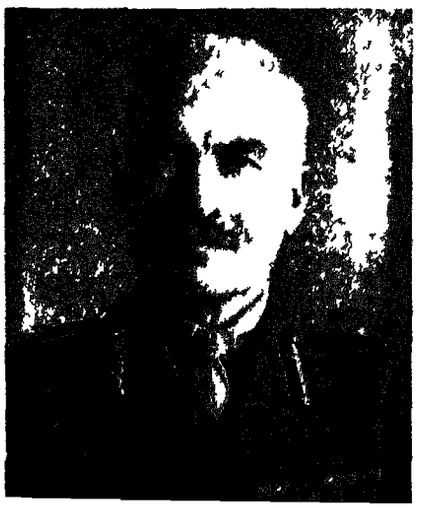


**C.I.G.S. AND DEPUTY**

General Sir W. E. Ironside, D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (above), served throughout the war of 1914-18, and afterwards commanded the British force at Archangel. Below is Maj.-Gen. Philip Neame, V.C., Deputy C.I.G.S. He won his V.C. at Neuve Chapelle in December, 1914.

*Photos, Keystone, Sport & General*







Chapter 15

# BRITAIN'S NEW ARMIES TAKE THE FIELD

*The B.E.F. of 1914–18—The Unified Force of 1939—Territorial Army takes over Anti-Aircraft Defence—Mechanization and Motorization—The Militia—Training for New Weapons—Improved Conditions of Service—'Battle Dress'—Million Men Under Arms—Confidence in the Commanders—Gort's Splendid Record—Ironside, of the Imperial General Staff—Corps Leaders*

UNLIKE the German people, the British are not "army conscious." They have long since abandoned jingoism. They are proud of the Royal Navy, though the average landsman knows singularly little about it. They have complete confidence in the Army, but it is not a subject of boasting, and, indeed, there are times when its very existence is hardly realized.

When, on September 1, 1939, general mobilization was proclaimed, those who remembered the fateful August of 1914 were quick to sense a great difference. Gone were the days when the streets resounded to the tramp of marching men, led by their band and followed by a crowd of the curious. Of the British army, now summoned to the defence of liberty, those who live in the towns saw little. There were rumours of big train movements during the nights, but, for the majority, the first information concerning the part that was being played by the army was given by Mr. Hore-Belisha, on October 11, when he announced to the House of Commons that a British Expeditionary Force of 158,000 men was already in France.

What of the British Army of today? In what way did this new army of Britain resemble the old B.E.F. of a quarter of a century ago, and in what way did it differ? It resembled its predecessor in its indomitable spirit. In most other ways it differed.

Prior to September 6, when by the passing of the Armed Forces (Conditions of Service) Act the various units of the British Army were welded into a whole, the British Army comprised several different parts. First, there was the Regular Army, differing in many respects from the armies of the Continent. Compared with these it was relatively small, since it depended on voluntary enlistment. Recruits joined for long service—seven years normally—and thus it was a highly trained force.

Complementary to this Regular Army in time of war was the Army Reserve, consisting of men who had returned to civilian life after completing their service with the colours, but who still remained for a further period liable to recall in the case of an emergency.

Behind the Regular Army stood our fine citizen-force, the Territorial Army, composed of civilians who had volunteered for military training on a four years' engagement, with an option of extending it. These units were administered by County Associations, thus retaining the old yeoman spirit, but their training was organized, under the direction of the War Office, by the military commands of the areas in which they were situated. The training comprised an annual camp of a fortnight's duration and a certain number of obligatory drills during the course of each year. In 1938 the Field Force units of the Territorial Army were reorganized on modern lines and provided with the latest equipment.

Then there was the Officers' Training Corps, a self-explanatory term, made up of a Senior and Junior Division, whose units were formed by members of public schools and universities; also a Supplementary Reserve, composed mainly of technicians, formed to meet the emergency needs of the Regular Army.

These units of the service in themselves would have provided a formidable field force, but a further augmentation of man power was brought about by the introduction of conscription in this country in April, 1939. This revolutionary break with British traditions, occasioned by the aggressive methods and menacing designs of the Totalitarian States of Europe, assured our allies abroad that Britain was ready to play her part to the last man in any war in defence of her liberties. Men conscripted under this scheme were allowed to state their preference—Army, Navy, Air Force—and those who chose the first were drafted into what is called the Militia—a term which recalls the glories of the voluntary defence of England in days long past.

Such, then, are the component parts of the British Army, to which may be added the regular and volunteer forces, both white and native, that are raised in the overseas Dominions, Colonies and Protectorates.

During the last war, at the end of 1914, Britain had three separate armies in existence and in preparation, all with competing interests. They were the Regular Army, soon to be styled the "Old Contemptibles," small in numbers, but well trained and led; the Territorials, a fine body of men, but ill-prepared for active service; and the so-called "Kitchener's Army," which suffered from a lack of trained N.C.O.s and was for a long while without equipment of any sort.

In less than a week from the outbreak of war in 1939 Britain had a



*Wide World*

**GENERAL MOBILIZATION ORDERED**

**On the outbreak of war the familiar figures of the mounted sentries with their shining breastplates and plumed helmets at Horse Guards Parade disappeared, being replaced, as seen above, by a sentry on foot in khaki service dress. The portico doors are seen closed and pasted with notices calling out the Reserves and the Territorials.**



**MASKED WARRIORS**

**Just how inhuman the modern soldier, faced with inhuman methods of warfare, can look is shown by the photograph above of soldiers in gas-masks doing their field training.**
*Photo, Fox*



**BRITISH ARMY'S NEW BATTLE DRESS**

**Front and back views of the new battle dress worn by the British Army. The ankles are protected by web anklets. The patch pocket on the left trouser leg is for maps, while the pouches on each side are for Bren gun mazagines, grenades or small-arm ammunition. In "battle order" the men also carry rifle, gas-mask, haversack, pack, anti-gas sheet, etc**
*Official War Office Photos*

single army, well equipped, well trained, and well led.

Let us now try to assess the strength of this new army. In the House of Commons on April 27, 1939, Mr. Hore-Belisha gave the establishment figures:

| | |
|---|---|
| Regular Army.. .. .. .. | 224,000 |
| Territorial Army Field Force | 325,000 |
| Anti-Aircraft Units (T A.) .. | 96,000 |

making a total of 645,000 men.

During the middle of July the first batch of Militiamen was called up, 34,000 in number, and additional recruiting for the Territorial Army between April and September brought in a further 36,000 men. To these must be added the Army Reserve and Supplementary Reserve, called up by proclamation on the outbreak of war, and numbering 150,000 men. Thus, on September 3, the British Army numbered about 865,000.

As Militiamen were called up for service by age groups, as and when required, the strength of the Army continued to grow, and it was estimated that by the middle of November, 1939, the British Army would be approximately a million strong, and would increase as further batches of Militiamen were added from time to time.

So far as numbers are concerned, this formidable force is very largely a recent creation. Following the Great War the Army was relegated to the background, and to all intents and purposes it reverted to its pre-war basis and strength. In 1922 its establishment was reduced as a measure of economy, and with the setting up of the Irish Free State five infantry regiments were disbanded. During the previous year sixteen cavalry regiments were merged, the new regiment being made up of two

squadrons of the senior regiment and one of the junior. The Regular Army, which in 1914 had possessed six infantry divisions, now found itself reduced to five, and artillery batteries were reduced from six to four guns.

The Territorial Force, which had been created in 1907, was reconstituted as the Territorial Army in 1922. Most Yeomanry regiments were unhorsed and turned into artillery or armoured car units. In 1935 it was decided that the Territorial Army should assume entire responsibility for Anti-Aircraft Defence at home. At that time the strength of air-defence formations in the Territorial Army was under 2,000. In January, 1936, the first Anti-Aircraft Division was formed, and by the end of April, 1939, the establishment of the A.A units T.A. was 96,000.

From 1925 to 1935 recruiting was far from satisfactory. A remedy was sought by making the conditions of service more attractive. Special proficiency pay was granted on a graduated scale, in such a way that the rise became greater with increasing length of service.

**Aids to Recruiting**

The experiment was also tried of making the army a life career for men in the ranks by allowing them to enlist for twelve years' service with the colours, with the option of re-engaging to complete a total service of 21 years, when they should become eligible for a pension. Short-term soldiers were given vocational training during their last six months' service to fit them for civil life.

Much greater attention was also paid to the improvement of service conditions. Barracks were modernized, the soldiers' menu improved, and more opportunities were given for promotion.

Since the beginning of the century, tactical theories of warfare have been revolutionized by the introduction of many new factors. The evolution of the machine-gun, the use of much heavier artillery in the field, the replacement of the horse by motor transport, the invention of the tank, and the introduction of poison gas as an element of war—all these factors have led to considerable alterations in the structure of the fighting forces.

At the beginning of the century the infantryman, armed with rifle and bayonet, was taken as the unit of strength of an army. Artillery was merely an auxiliary arm, and fire-power was reckoned to be approximately the same as man-power. The introduction of the machine-gun and tank meant that the ratio of fire-power to man-power was greatly increased. But after the Great War there was doubt in all countries about the shape armies of the future would take. Many of the war inventions were inapplicable to mobile conditions and were in a primitive state of development. A long period of experiment was needed to develop them and to study their tactical implications. After the war, with disarmament in prospect and a long period of peace, experiments were of course tentative; the immediate problem was the reorganization of Britain's army for its normal duties of policing the Empire, making use of new weapons suitable for the purpose. A time of acute financial stringency caused experimental work to be restricted, and the Army vote barely sufficed to maintain the force in a state of efficiency for its police duties. Not until the Italo-Abyssinian war and German rearmament loosed the nation's purse strings could the still incomplete experiments begin to be applied to the reorganization of the army on a European basis, and by that time the types of weapons and machines developed by earlier experiment were already obsolete. Experiment had laid the foundations however, and as funds became available progress in mechanization and reorganization began to be notable. Under Mr. Hore-Belisha's vigorous regime and with a general realization of approaching danger the pace was greatly accelerated.

**The 'Belisha' Army**

As a result of this reorganization, divisions, and also units, were reduced in size, while their ratio of fire-power to man-power was greatly increased. Divisions were split into two classes: motorized divisions, based on the light machine-gun, and mechanized armoured divisions, based on the tank. Motorized divisions were made up of nine battalions, instead of twelve, and each battalion was provided with 50 Bren guns.

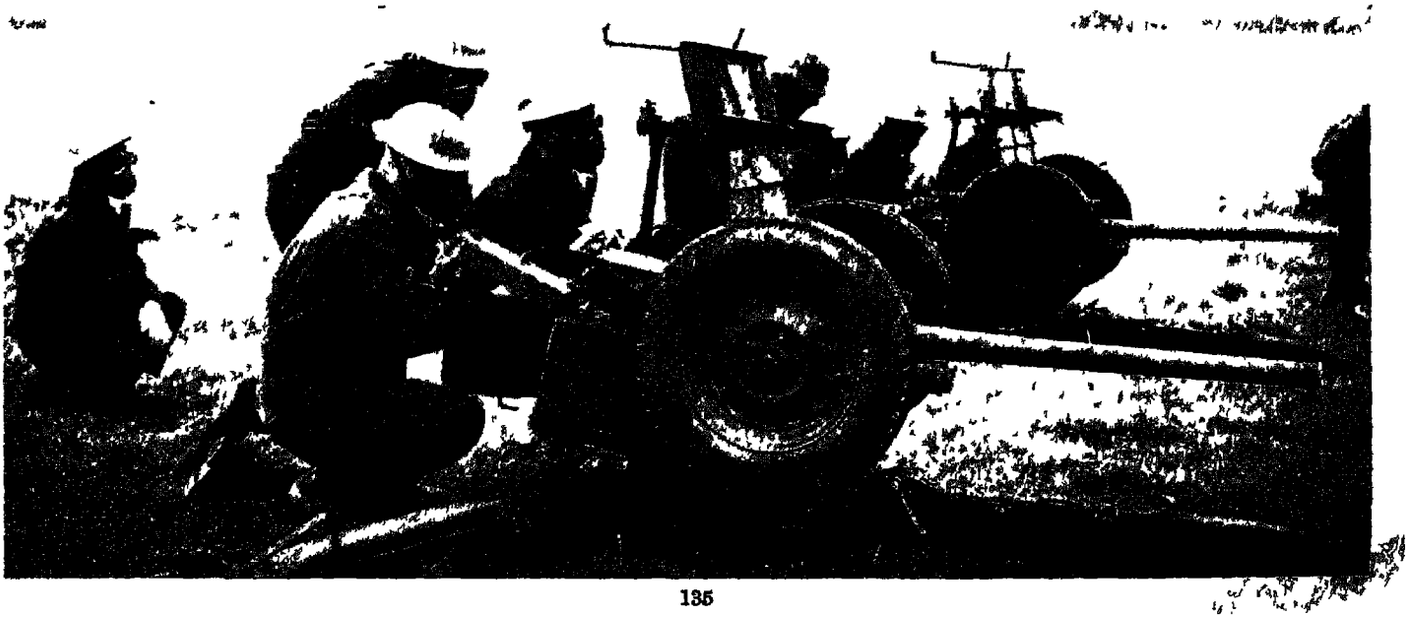
Apart from the Household Cavalry, the Scots Greys and the 1st Royal Dragoons, all British Cavalry on the Home establishment was mechanized, light and fast tanks replacing horses. But the role of the "cavalry" still remains the same—namely, to provide the reconnaissance element for the Division.

The battalion of Infantry today consists of Headquarters, an H.Q. company

**NEW DEFENCE AGAINST NEW WEAPONS**

**The introduction of the tank in 1916 added a new factor to modern warfare. To combat the new arm anti-tank rifles were hurriedly evolved, and these later developed into more powerful and efficient anti-tank guns. Below, the masked gun-crews of British anti-tank guns are seen at drill. Note the pneumatic tires, split trail and bullet shield**

*Photo, Keystone*



and four other companies. Each company has three platoons of three sections. Thus it will be seen that a Battalion Commander has one platoon per company less than hitherto, but though he has fewer men to command, his fire-strength is much greater. Probably his most useful acquisition under the new organization is the Carrier Platoon, with its armoured carriers. They are speedy and afford excellent protection to the flanks, while they can act as links between the tanks and the infantry, or as covering parties, and provide mobile fire units for use in a counter-attack. The crew of these carriers are armed with Bren guns or anti-tank rifles.

**Reorganizing the Artillery**

Artillery, reduced from six to four guns per battery in 1922, has been reorganized in batteries of twelve guns, and has also taken over from the infantry the 2-pounder anti-tank gun. The stock gun is now the 25-pounder, which has a far greater range than the old 18-pounder. No longer are the guns pulled by horses; they and their limbers are towed by motor-vehicles.

Nor was the question of dress forgotten in this reorganization. On the outbreak of war a War Office order decreed that:

> "For the duration of War.
> Full dress, undress and mess dress will not be worn on any occasion. Service dress or battle dress will be worn."

One point about the new "battle dress" of the British Army which would appeal to the "old sweat" of 1914–18 is that it has no buttons. How many of those whose memory goes back to the weary bouts with button-stick and "Soldier's Friend" must regret that the modern battle dress did not exist in their day!

In the field, battle dress is universal for man and officer alike. The only distinguishing mark of an officer is his shoulder badge of rank in worsted. But the officer's equipment differs, for he carries revolver, binoculars, compass, and a haversack for maps, message pads, etc. The battle dress is a two-piece garment, consisting of blouse and trousers of heavy khaki serge fastening at the wrists and elbows. There are no puttees to come unwound, but the ankles are protected by web anklets. A large patch pocket on the front of the left trouser-leg holds maps or message pads. A haversack, fitted on to a belt at the left side, takes the mess-tin, water-bottle and emergency ration.

A word now as to training. When mobilization was ordered, the Regular Army and the majority of the Territorials were already trained men, but there remained the Militia, the first group of which had been called up only a month or two previously. Obviously, in the case of short-term soldiers, particularly when their services were required as speedily as possible, it was impossible to devote the same time in training as was considered necessary with the other units of the army. The time factor made intensive training imperative. The soldier was taught to be a sapper, or gunner, or infantryman from the first day; the technical side of his work predominated. Drilling was subordinated to producing specialists as quickly as possible, and there was little attempt to make the Militiaman a duplicate of the Regular, for the latter is the product of long and rigid disciplinary training.

As an example let us take the Militiamen who were in training at Colchester just prior to the outbreak of War. The 7th Field Co. R.E. finished all their drill in three weeks and by the end of the fourth had fired their musketry course. The 27th Field Regiment R.A., we are told, learned the fundamentals of map-reading, the use of their equipment and the whole of their gun-drill in the same space of time. A like period sufficed for the fundamental training of the 14th Anti-tank Regiment. In general, a seven-week programme was followed in training Militiamen, though this time limit, of course, was liable to some variation, according to the differing requirements of the many branches of the service.

The new Militia camps were very different from the old barracks, a word which we nowadays employ to connote a drab building entirely devoid of any comfort. The barracks erected for the Militiamen, though outwardly resembling the wooden army hut so familiar from 1914 to 1918, bore little resemblance inside to those draughty dwellings. They were built in groups of six huts, and each block contained a drying room; gone were the days when the men sat about sopping wet after a field-day in the pouring rain. In addition, each block contain a bathroom, lavatories, washrooms and showers with hot and cold water. All quarters had central heating, while beside every bed (and here old soldiers will receive a shock!) were a radiator and an electric light. Nor could the kitchens be inspected without a pang of envy by army cooks of a bygone day. In addition to appliances for steam cooking, there were hot-air ovens, frying machines and roasting apparatus, while for making tea there were special hot-water taps which allowed water to pass only when it was actually boiling. An unpleasant "fatigue" had also been abolished — that bane of the soldier's life, peeling potatoes. This was now done by machinery, and machinery was also employed for washing up the dishes.

Even the soldier's "kip" had changed for the better. Gone were the old "biscuits"; in their place was a bed with a one-piece mattress, and, greatest luxury of all, the old clothes-chest had been replaced by a wardrobe with coat-hangers! Well, all this is undoubtedly to the good, for the Militiaman could now concentrate on his soldiering without having to spend so much of his time as a maid-of-all-work.



**SCOTS DEVISING TANGLES FOR NAZIS**

Belts of wire entanglements form an important part of trench defences, for they can hold up an infantry attack until cut or demolished by gun-fire or tanks. Here, Scottish soldiers are seen erecting wire entanglements during their training, "somewhere in Hampshire."

*Photo, War*



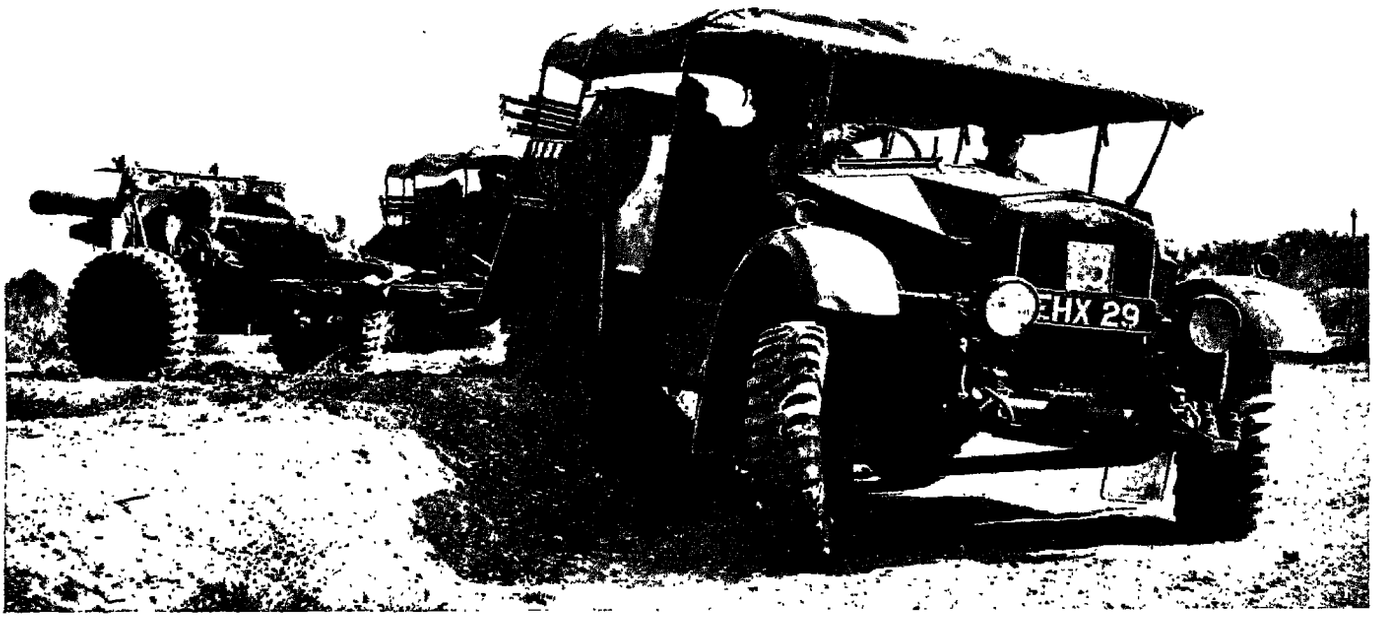



## MODERN TANK CORPS IN TRAINING

The tank, which made its first appearance in September, 1916, during the battle of the Somme, has since been developed by all the Great Powers. Above, an instructor is demonstrating to his pupils the essential differences in certain types of foreign tanks. On the left, a sergeant is showing a squad how to mount a Vickers tank machine-gun. Below, men of the Tank Corps are being instructed in engineering theory; a practical demonstration will afterwards be given on the tank itself

*Photos, Keystone, Fox*






**MECHANIZATION MAKES THE ARTILLERY MOBILE**

**The petrol engine has brought about many changes in the army, and among other things has almost eliminated horse transport. In 1914, to bring into action a six-gun battery of the R.H.A., no less than 200 horses were needed. Today, guns and limbers are hauled by motor transport in the manner shown above.**

*Photo, "Daily Mirror"*

It was stated above that the new British Army was not only well trained and well equipped, but, what is even more important, well led. A word about its leaders will be appropriate here.

An appointment which was greeted with unanimous approval, not only in the army, but by the nation at large, was that of General Viscount Gort, V.C., as Commander-in-Chief of the British Field Force. Previously he had been Chief of the Imperial General Staff. Lord Gort joined the Grenadier Guards in 1905, at the age of nineteen. When war broke out in 1914 he was a captain; when it was over he had won the V.C., the D.S.O. with two bars, and the M.C., and had been mentioned nine times in dispatches.

**Viscount Gort's V.C.**

His V.C. was gained, "For most conspicuous bravery, skilful leading and devotion to duty during the attack of the Guards Division on September 27, 1918, across the Canal du Nord, near Flesquières, when in command of the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, the leading battalion of the 3rd Guards Brigade." Director of Military Training in India, 1932–36, he came home to take up the post of Commandant of the Staff College at Camberley. It was at this time he came into contact with the Secretary of State for War, Mr. Hore-Belisha. A good story is told of their first meeting. This runs that they were both on vacation, ski-ing in the Alps. They came into violent collision. "Who the hell are you?" shouted the War Minister. "Gort," shouted back the other. The two men soon came to an understanding. Hore-Belisha appointed Gort his Military Secretary at the War Office, and later, in December, 1937, raised him to the Army's highest post.

His men have implicit confidence in the C.-in-C. They know his record in war, and know, too, that he would not ask of them anything he was not prepared to do himself. That this confidence is shared by the entire nation may be judged from a story which circulated freely at the outbreak of war, when it was suggested that we could adopt no better slogan than a slight transposition of one which was so popular with the Germans during the last war: "Gort mit uns!"

Bearing the same relation to General Lord Gort as did Sir William Robertson to French and Haig from 1915 to 1918, is General Sir Edmund Ironside, Chief of the Imperial General Staff. Six feet four in height, "Tiny" Ironside is another man who has the country's confidence. Of him it has been said that "for determination and fertility in devising expedients to meet difficult situations he is without superior."

Born on May 6, 1880, Ironside was, during the early days of the war of 1914–18, a general staff officer in France. He has been all over the world. In 1899, as a British secret service agent, in East Africa, he served in the German army, pretending to be a young Boer with pro-German sympathies. One day he made a slip and answered an officer in High German instead of Taal, and had to run for his life. He commanded the Allied troops at Archangel against the Bolsheviks from October, 1918 to October, 1919, and was in command of the British forces engaged in north-west Persia in 1920. He was put in command of the Meerut district, in India, in 1928; they sent him to organize the defences of Hong Kong, and later to inspect those of the Rock of Gibraltar. His favourite phrase is "Give me a free hand."

The command of the 1st Army Corps in France fell to General Sir John Greer Dill, who, when war broke out, was G.O.C. Aldershot Command. Aged 58, General Dill won the D.S.O. during the war of 1914–18; serving as Director of Military Operations and Intelligence at the War Office from 1934 to 1936, he distinguished himself as commander of the British Forces in Palestine during the stormy period of 1936.

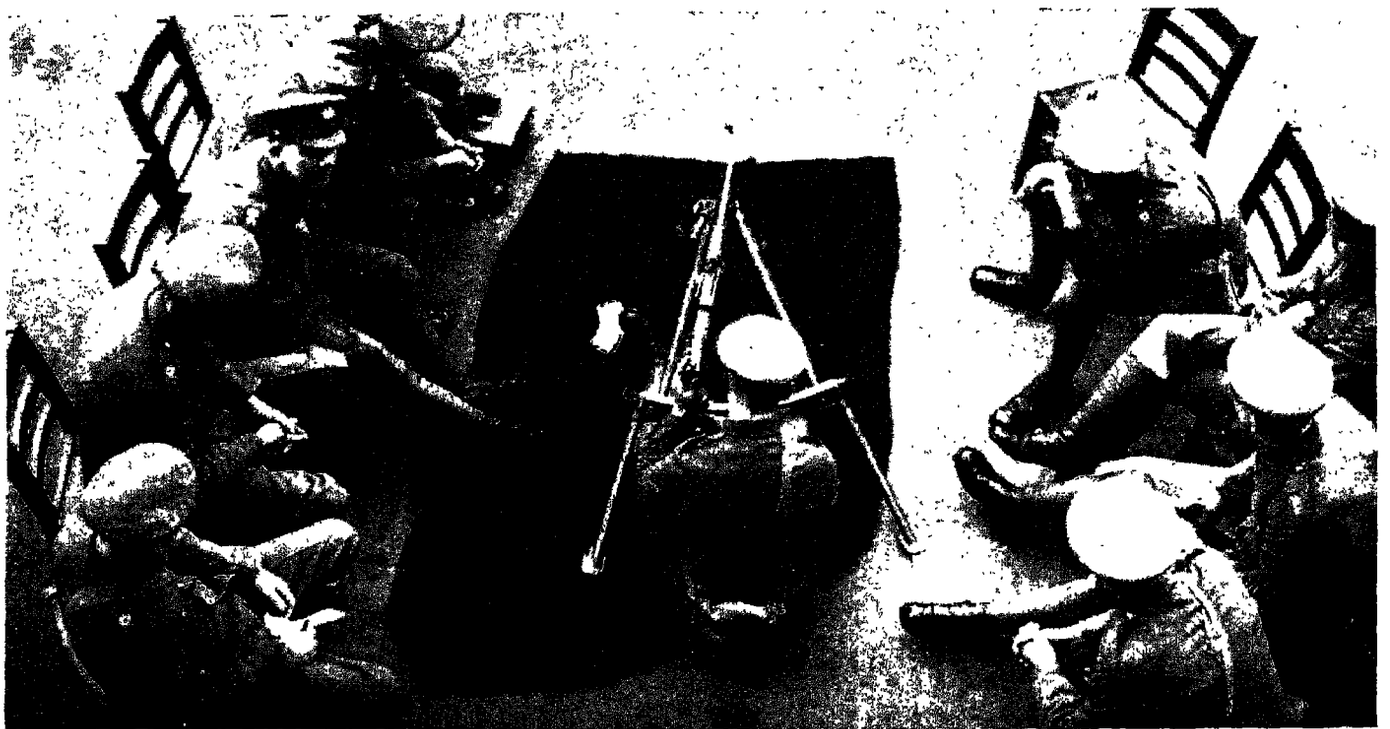
General Alan Francis Brooke, G.O.C. Southern Command, was appointed to the command of the 2nd Army Corps in France. Aged 56, he went to France in 1914 with the Secunderabad Cavalry Brigade. Later he became Brigade-Major, 18th Divisional Artillery; G.S.O.2, R.A., Canadian Corps, and G.S.O.1, R.A., First Army. In the course of the war he won the D.S.O. and the M.C.



**IRONCLAD OF THE WAR BY LAND**

It is not surprising that tanks were at first called landships, for this striking photograph of a tank approaching certa
gives the impression of a battleship forging ahead through a rough sea. Flags are borne by tanks for sig
purposes. Wireless communication is also made use of, and both officer and man above are wearing hea

*Photo, Keystone*





**BRITAIN'S NEWEST ARMY IN TRAINING**

One of the main tactical considerations of a modern army at war is to maintain a high ratio of fire-power in proportion to the number of men in the field ; for this reason the light machine-gun, capable of long and rapid bursts of fire, is used in increasing numbers. The top photograph shows men of the Scots Guards undergoing a course of instruction in the use of the Bren gun. In the lower picture, infantry are being trained in trench warfare.

*Photos, Associated Press ; Planet News*





**WEIGHTY ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE FOE**

Modern warfare, which often involves siege operations against strongly fortified positions, has led to the increase and perfection of heavy artillery. The top photograph shows the gun crew of a heavy battery in training by the side of their powerful weapon. In the lower picture, men of the Royal Artillery are rolling up the ammo shells used by a 9·2 howitzer, during gunnery practice at an artillery school.

*Photos, Central Press; Planet News*



Photo, Sport & General

## THE NEW GENERATION SINGS THE OLD SONGS

For the second time in a generation a British Expeditionary Force sailed to France to help our French allies, and, as can be seen from the photograph above, which shows some of them waiting to entrain, they were every whit as cheerful as their predecessors. Their motto continued to be "Are we downhearted? No-o-o!" and though their uniform, arms and equipment differed somewhat from those of the Tommy of 1914, the indomitable spirit which animated them remained unchanged.

Lieut.-General Henry Royds Pownall, Director of Military Operations at the War Office, was appointed Chief of Staff to Viscount Gort. He also won the D.S.O. and M.C. during the 1914–18 war.

Lieut.-General Sir Douglas Brownrigg, Director-General of the Territorial Army until its incorporation in the British Army on September 6, 1939, was appointed Adjutant-General to the British Field Force. Born in 1886, he served during the last war in Gallipoli, Egypt and Mesopotamia, and was six times mentioned in dispatches.

In Britain on the outbreak of war in 1914 we were well prepared to meet the surface vessels of the German navy and to send the Regular Army to the assistance of France and Belgium. We were unprepared, however, for submarine warfare; and the formation of a great National Army had never been contemplated. Equipment and munitions for the new armies did not exist at that early date; we had, moreover, no establishments in which they could at once be produced.

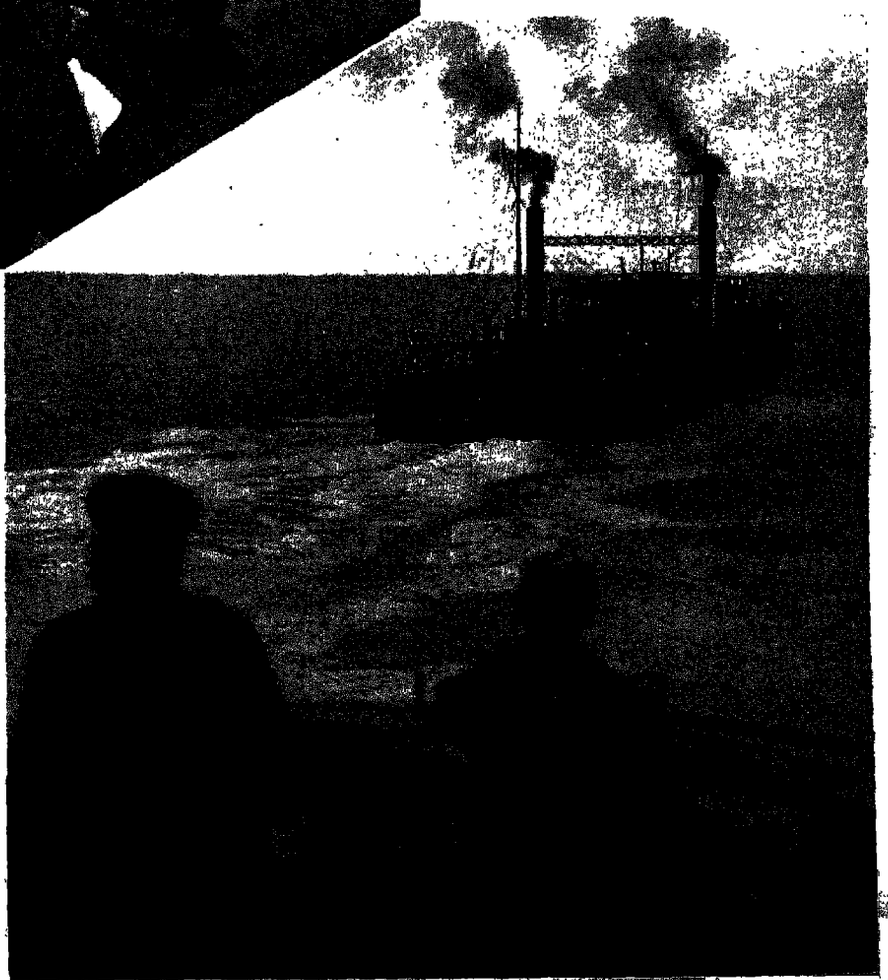
Thus the whole process of expanding our fighting forces did not begin until we were actually at war, and there was inevitable confusion and delay in getting it into methodical working order. In addition, the expenditure of life and munitions in the theatre of war had far exceeded all expectations; this applied to all the combatants, who by the end of six months had exhausted practically all reserves built up in peace in anticipation of war,

Of September 1, 1939, history will have a different tale to tell. Forewarned by the crisis of a year before, both Britain and France were prepared as never before in their history. Mobilization was completed without a hitch, and the Allied armies, trained to the minute, were ready to take up their positions on a line backed by almost impregnable fortifications, equipped with the most modern weapons and assured of their supplies. They could afford to bide their time and await the enemy's onslaught with quiet confidence.

**Perfectly Prepared**

How Britain's army and equipment were carried to France for the second time in a generation, without a single casualty, is told in a later chapter.





**OUTWARD BOUND**

**Members of the British Field Force, fit and smiling, are here seen on their way to the transport which was to take them to France. On the right are army lorries on a ferry-boat, also en route for France, under the vigilant eye of the Dover Patrol.**

*Photos, Extract from Paramount News Reel; Associated Press*

Upon the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, the French War Minister, Lebœuf, declared in the cabinet council that the French army was perfectly prepared for war. Boldly and confidently he asserted: "the army is perfectly supplied in every respect, and it will not require the purchase of a single gaiter-button for a year to come—*elle est archiprête.*" His boast was falsified ere it had scarcely left his mouth. Mobilization was completely defective, the main fortresses on the eastern front had not been placed in a state of defence; rations and supplies were lacking, and generals did not even know where their divisions were to be found. The march to Berlin quickly became a retreat on Paris!





**TWO CENTRES OF HEROIC POLISH RESISTANCE**

**Modlin, the Polish fort to the north of Warsaw, held out to the last. On the left is seen the wreckage of some of the buildings ; below, columns of smoke are seen arising after a German aerial attack. Above, the Polish Naval Delegate is seen surrounded by German officers after handing over the Peninsula of Hela, on the Baltic, the fortress of which offered fierce resistance.**

*Photos, Mondiale; Keystone, Wide World*



Chapter 16

# THE POLISH TRAGEDY: THE CURTAIN FALLS

*After the Battle—Spoils of the Conquest—Poland's Essential Contribution —German Army's Real Losses—Warsaw under the Conqueror—Nazification and Bolshevization—Leaders in Exile—New 'Government in Exile'—Polish Legion—Hitler's Plans for Poland*

WARSAW, after a siege which will be remembered as long as men seek inspiration for the present in the record of the past, had fallen. So, too, had Hela and Modlin and the other centres of resistance whose name and fame had penetrated to the outside world. Six weeks after the first shots were exchanged on the frontier, Polish troops were still holding out against Germans or Russians at isolated points in the Carpathian Mountains and in the recesses of the Pripet Marshes; but so far as the chief antagonists were concerned, the war was over. On October 16 the German High Command issued what was declared would be positively the last communiqué from the Polish front. The German troops, it said, had completed the occupation of the German zone of interests in Poland.

The army which had mobilized with such readiness and marched to war so unquestioningly confident in its leaders and in itself, was smashed into utter ruin. Thousands had been slain, many thousands were wounded; a huge host had gone to the prison-camps of the conquerors. The cavalry, so recently the nation's pride, had dashed itself to destruction against the armoured front of tanks and cars. The statesmen on whose words Europe had been wont to wait were fugitives in a foreign land, and their exile was shared by the military chiefs who had led Poland's armies to the battlefield. From the Baltic to the Carpathians, from Silesia to Vilna, the sacred soil of Poland was trampled by the invader, and the Polish people faced a future in which they were doomed to remain for an indefinite and indefinable period under alien rule.

After the collapse there were many criticisms of the way in which the campaign had been prepared for and conducted. It was said that, though the Government had laid plans of a comprehensive description for the evacuation of the civilian population, no evacuation of any kind, whether of children or their mothers, the old or the sick, was carried into effect. For the most part the civilians were left to make their own arrangements, while such trains and road transport as were available were mobilized for the Government and Army staffs.

No débâcle had been expected—never for a moment had such a thing been believed possible—with the result that huge quantities of war material and public and private wealth fell into the hands of the invaders. True, most of the coal mines in Silesia were flooded by the miners as they came up for the last time, and many factories were blown up or otherwise destroyed by the workers in a passion of patriotic sabotage. Petrol-tanks and oil-wells were similarly fired. But even so, vast army stores were captured, and the booty of one sort and another was incalculable in quantity and worth.

German propaganda contributed its quota to the mood of general depression. Amongst the Poles and in the neutral world it strove to spread the belief that the Polish army in its four weeks of struggle had contributed nothing of any real value to the cause of the Allies. Britain and France, however, hastened to express their appreciation of their eastern ally's stand against impossibly large odds. A British Government statement effectively countered the Nazi suggestion of unavailing sacrifice.

In the first place, it was pointed out, the casualties inflicted by the Polish army on their opponents were undoubtedly very much larger than those admitted by Hitler in his Reichstag speech on October 6. His figure of 44,000 killed and wounded was a ludicrous underestimate. Much more probable was it that the Nazi losses were at least 150,000—a very considerable wastage at the outset of what might well be a long war.

(A much larger figure was suggested by the "Arbeiter Zeitung" of Zurich. The real German losses in the campaign



**WAR DAMAGE USED AS PROPAGANDA**

**The photograph above shows damage done to one of the main streets of Bielitz (60 miles S.W. of Cracow) during the fighting between Poles and Germans. According to the vicious propaganda of the Nazis it was "blown up by the Po**



THE LOST LEADER

After the collapse of the Polish army, caught between two fires Poland s leaders were forced to flee over the frontier into Rumania 'Marshal Smigly Rydz seen above with his wife in the grounds of their old home in Poland found refuge for the time being at Craiowa a Rumanian town about 120 miles west of Bucharest

*Photo Keystone*

in Poland, declared this Swiss newspaper, were 91 278 dead, 63 417 seriously wounded and 84,938 slightly wounded These figures were obtained, said the newspaper, from confidential statistics drawn up by the German War Ministry And it is an historic fact that the Official German History of the War of 1914–18 gives figures of losses totalling 33 per cent more than any admitted during hostilities )

**German Losses in Poland**

Germany's losses in material, continued the official statement, must also have been on a large scale In one attack alone they were reliably reported to have lost 83 tanks on a narrow front, and in a successful counter attack delivered by General Sosnkowski near Lwow on September 16 they were said to have lost a further hundred Losses of German warplanes were considerable beyond a doubt, and the consumption of petrol—weakest point in Germany's supply system—was enormous Then by holding some seventy German divisions (say 700,000 men) on the Eastern Front the Poles had enabled France to complete her mobilization without the slightest hitch or disturbance and by compelling the Nazis to concentrate the bulk of their Air Force on Poland they had contributed greatly to the safe transportation of the British Field Force to France

Again, the Polish campaign furnished the Allies with valuable information as to the tactics developed by Germany in the use of aircraft, tanks and mechanized units, and at the same time the confidence of the German war chiefs in their men and machines may well have been shaken by the demonstration that, even against quite weak defensive positions, the Nazi infantry were unable to advance without tank support, and by the effectiveness of even the limited anti tank artillery possessed by the Poles

Finally, the statement paid tribute to the heroic defence of Warsaw, Modlin and the rest, whose gallantry had given to the world an example of priceless value That example it was declared would stimulate the Allied forces in the West—those forces on whose victorious efforts it had always been clear that the eventual independence of Poland would be established

Whatever the effects of Poland s efforts, there was no doubt as to her present misery In the space of a few weeks Warsaw was transformed from the capital of a free and happy people into a devastated and disease threatened prize of war Hitler did not stay long



AFTERMATH OF CONQUEST

After the rape of Poland, the Nazis strove to show themselves in the best possible light to the people of the country they had so brutally invaded, and above a Nazi welfare organization is seen distributing food to the poor at the Technical High School in Katowice

*Photo, Wide World*




CONQUERED POLAND IN TH.. . ...

Here are some photographs of Poland under Nazi rule Top left, are men of the motorized V kehrsdienst (Traffic detailed to help police the newly acquired territory Top right, Polish prisoners of war re seen working on under Nazi supervision Lower picture, traffic in Posen regulated by a German poli man with a mucrop

*Photos, Planet News, Wide World, Keystone*

enough in the city to see the havoc that his successful essay in *Blitzkrieg* had wrought, but his lieutenants found themselves confronted by a problem of the greatest magnitude.

On a German estimate eighty per cent of the city was in ruins, and although this was probably an exaggeration the destruction had been truly vast. At least 16,000 people had been killed in the siege, and many of them still lay buried beneath the ruins of their homes. The emergency hospitals were crammed to the doors with 80,000 wounded. The water mains had been burst in the bombardment, with the result that the population were compelled to drink contaminated water. Trams, omnibuses, electric light—all had stopped. The economic system had broken down under the strain of war, and the victors found themselves obliged to provide free meals every day for 600,000 half-starving folk. Society itself was on the verge of dissolution. The dividing line between rich and poor had been wiped out in a destruction shared in common, and those who only yesterday were rich and well-to-do were reduced to the queue of suppliants for the bread and water doled out by the conquerors' commissariat. Everywhere the agents of the Nazi Gestapo were in action under the immediate control of Herr Himmler himself, and with unrelenting zeal the more obtrusively patriotic and more outspoken anti-Germans were hunted down and removed to the safe silence of the prison or concentration-camp. There were strange tales, too, of a kind of official encouragement of the members of the Warsaw underworld. Scoundrels and street-women were sought out, so it was reported, and fed and clothed with the good things snatched from those who before the war had been set high above them in the social scale. But such Robin Hood tactics found small response amongst the people.

**Warsaw's Pitiable Plight**

In the country at large Nazification and Bolshevization were in full swing. Across the old frontier poured into Germany huge droves of Polish prisoners of war—labour conscripts condemned to toil in the German fields; and in the opposite direction came troops of Nazi organizers, technicians and Gestapo police and spies, ready to play their part in the new field so suddenly opened up to their activities. Gdynia, Poland's splendid creation on the Baltic, was emptied of its Polish citizens and of the Jews; the houses from which they were ejected were made ready for the reception of the Baltic Germans who were expected to be "returning home" from Latvia and Estonia.

On the Russian side of the line of demarcation the Soviet agents were proceeding most enthusiastically with their purge of undesirable elements. Order was quickly established in the occupied territory—many of whose inhabitants, it should be said, had been





**POLISH PATRIOTS CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE**

**Among the members of the new Polish "government in exile," constituted in Paris in October, 1939, were Colonel Adam Koc (left), a former governor of the Bank of Poland, and M. August Zaleski (right), for seven years Poland's Foreign Minister. At the same time a Polish Legion was formed in France from émigrés, volunteers, and ex-soldiers. Below, soldiers of this new Polish army at the butts.**

*Photos, Art Photos, Planet News, Keystone*



born Russian citizens—and everything possible was done to discredit the Polish regime that had just collapsed and to show the Soviet system in the most favourable and attractive light.

A month after the Russian occupation of Poland began a plebiscite was held under Soviet auspices in Western White Russia and the Western Ukraine. It was announced that roughly 4,780,000 people in the latter, or 93 per cent of the electorate, went to the poll, and that of these 91 per cent supported the Bolshevist candidates for the national convention. In White Russia nearly 97 per cent of the electorate were said to have voted, and again about 91 per cent of the 2,700,000 voters gave their support to the Bolshevist candidates. No opposition candidates were allowed to stand. Following the election, conventions were held at Lwow and Bialystok, at which Western White

Russia and the Western Ukraine were voted into the Soviet Union.

Shortly afterwards came the report that the National Assembly of Western Ukraine, meeting at Lwow, had passed a resolution ordering and legalizing the confiscation of all land belonging to the monasteries and the estates of former landlords and Polish officials, as well as the nationalization of all banks, important industries, mines and railways. Similar measures were proposed at Bialystok and at once put into effect. Thus the Bolshevization of Soviet Poland proceeded on the same lines as that of Russia as a whole twenty years before

received the jewels, the fur coats, and the like they had salved from the wreck. At night the wanderers huddled into doorways or slept in the straw of a kindly farmer's barn. And not only Rumania but Hungary also had its share of the refugee flood.

Even Poland's leaders had been forced to beg in Rumania a refuge from the storms and perils of war. President Moscicki, who had crossed the frontier on September 18, ultimately found refuge at the little town of Sinaia, looked down upon by the castle of the Rumanian royal family. Colonel Beck, the Foreign Minister who for so many years had played a prominent part in the councils of Europe, was there, too—in a sanatorium. Marshal Smigly Rydz, having lost touch with the battle long before the fighting had died away, was in a palace at Craiowa with his wife. Other members of the Polish Government and High Command found a resting place at Herculanee, near Turnu Severin by the Iron Gate on the Danube.

The status of the Polish leaders was somewhat obscure; the Rumanian Government apparently demurred to their departure from the country save as private citizens, and of course they could not exercise any authority on Rumanian soil. Soon the situation was resolved by President Moscicki who, exercising his constitutional right to choose his successor, on September 30 resigned the presidency in favour of M. Wladyslaw Raczkiewicz, then in Paris. The new President at once took the oath at the Polish Embassy, and proceeded to form a new Polish Government—a "Government in exile." General Wladyslaw Sikorski became Prime Minister and Minister of War, and other famous names in the list included M. August Zaleski, for many years Poland's Foreign Minister and spokesman at the League meetings in Geneva, and Colonel Adam Koc. It was announced that the opposition parties would be represented in the Cabinet, so that the new Government was, in fact, a "Government of National Unity and National Defence."

**Moscicki's Successor**

One of the first acts of the new Government was to dispatch a note through the Polish ambassadors in Paris and London to the British and French Governments protesting against



**UNWILLING RETURN TO THE 'FATHERLAND'**

**After the U.S.S.R. had taken over the Latvian and Estonian ports of the Baltic, Hitler ordered many Baltic Germans to return at once to the Fatherland. The photograph above shows a group of German nationals coming ashore at Danzig from the liner in which they had travelled from Latvia and Estonia. Below is depicted a pathetic scene on the quayside at Riga, showing Latvian relatives and friends bidding farewell to Baltic Germans returning to the Reich.**

*Photos, Associated Press Keystone*

But what was perhaps the most tragic act in the Polish drama was played not in Warsaw or anywhere in Poland, but across the frontier in the South. Before the Soviet invaders cut the lines of communication, tens of thousands of Poles of all classes had managed to cross into Rumania. There such of them as were soldiers were disarmed and rounded up into camps. As for the rest, the resources of the country were insufficient to cope with the flood of homeless, half-starving, ragged, and altogether wretched immigrants. In miserable processions, in little groups or in ones and twos, they wandered through the land, meeting here and there with kindness and solace, there the shut door and the empty hand. All their worldly goods were contained in their pitifully small bundles or in the handcarts they pushed before them. Money they had little or none; the pawnshops soon





WHAT TWO BOMBS DID

Here is shown what two bombs did during the German aerial bombardment of Warsaw. The first fell near the blocks of flats above, breaking the water main and, as seen in the foreground, making a crater about 30 feet across. A second bomb fell directly on one block of buildings, leaving only a fragment of one wall standing.

*Photo, Associated Press*

the Soviet-German Pact which had led to the overrunning and partitioning of their country. "Poland will never recognize this *act of* iniquity and violence," read the note, "and, fortified by the justice of her cause, she will not cease to fight for the day when her territory will be free from the invader and her legitimate rights will be completely re-established."

**Poland Indomitable**

For the present, at least, the fight had finished in Poland itself, but a new Polish army was coming into being in France to carry on the traditions and work of that which had fought so gallantly on its native soil. The nucleus of the new army was a Polish Legion, recruited from émigrés, volunteers, and ex-soldiers who had made their escape from Poland. At its head stood the new Prime Minister, General Sikorski, who, as one of the chief organizers of the Polish forces in the Great War and the subsequent war with Russia, had experience and prestige second to none. Ultimately the Legion would take its place with the French armies on the Western Front. Until that day came Poland's contribution to the fighting-line took the shape of three destroyers, which managed to escape from the German fleet in the Baltic and went on patrol with the British Navy in the North Sea.

But Hitler and his chieftains cared for none of these things. Not yet did they fear that they might be called to account for what they had obtained by bloody violence. What more pleasant occupation for a morning council than the nice division of the rich spoils of war? So they schemed and planned, drew lines on the map and moved the peoples this way and that like pawns on a chess-board.

Some whisper of their conclusions escaped into the outside world. There was to be a Poland, it seemed, but nothing resembling the Poland which had dared to challenge the Nazi Reich. The German frontier was to be pushed far to the east, farther than it was in 1914, but Cracow and Lodz and Czestochowa would be included in a state which would have its centre in Warsaw. Whether this state was to be independent, a protectorate like Bohemia, or a vassal like Slovakia, was not known as yet. Then there was talk of a Jewish state round Lublin, in south-east Poland—a reserve to which would be hounded all the Jews that the Reich found superfluous, as well as the Jews from the other parts of Nazi Poland.

Ere long it became apparent that Hitler was toying with the idea of peopling the land he had conquered with hundreds of thousands of Germans whom he was "calling home" from the Baltic lands, from Russia and Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Hungary. Agriculturists, it was said, would be settled in Western Poland, while the industrialists and artisans would be placed in the industrial areas.

There was never a word of sympathy for the conquered. Poland had stood in the way of Hitler's ambitions; she had lost the war, and the Poles must pay the price of defeat.

# *Historic Documents. XXVII*

## *HITLER'S 'PEACE' PROPOSALS AFTER WARSAW*

At the conclusion of his Polish campaign, Herr Hitler, on October 6, 1939, addressed the Reichstag, and the world, on the subject of the European situation. The first part of his speech was a survey of past events; the second part, most of which we reprint below, contained proposals for a cessation of hostilities and for "settling" problems resulting from the war.

WHY should there be any war in the West? For the restoration of Poland? The Poland of the Versailles Treaty will never rise again. Two of the greatest States in the world guarantee that. The final shaping of this territory, and the question of the restoration of a Polish State, are problems which cannot be settled by war in the West but exclusively by Russia on the one side and Germany on the other. Moreover, the elimination of these two States from this area would not result in a new State coming into being in the territory in question, but only in endless chaos. The problems which have to be settled there will be settled *neither at a conference table nor in editorial rooms*, but by work spreading over decades.

The ability of the Western democracies to bring about *orderly conditions has not been reasonably proved anywhere*. Germany has not only restored peace and order in its protectorates of Bohemia and Moravia, but, above all, prepared the ground for fresh economic prosperity and for an ever closer understanding between the two nations. England will have a great deal to do before she is able to point to similar results in her own protectorate of Palestine.

Moreover, it should be recognized how senseless it would be to destroy millions of human lives and hundreds of millions of property in order to re-erect a framework which was regarded as an abortion by all who were not Poles. What otherwise, then, could be the reason for war? Has Germany made any demands to England which threaten the British Empire in *any way or have placed its existence in danger?*

No; but if this war is really to be waged in order to give Germany a new regime, to smash the present rule and create a new Versailles, then *millions* of human beings will be sacrificed again; for neither will the German Reich break to pieces nor will a second Versailles emerge. But even if, after a war lasting three, or four, or even eight years, this should be possible, then a second Versailles would be a source of new conflicts in the future. No; this war in the West will not settle any problems at all except, perhaps, the finances of certain international war profiteers.

Two questions are today at issue:

(1) The regulation of the problems arising from the dismemberment of Poland; and

(2) The problem of dealing with those international anxieties which make the political and economic life of nations so difficult.

### Creation of 'Living Space'

WHAT are the aims of the German Government with regard to the regulation of the conditions in the space west of the German-Russian line of demarcation, which has been recognized as a sphere of German interests? They are:

(1) To create a Reich frontier which, as has already been emphasized, corresponds to the historical, ethnographic, and economic realities.

(2) To regulate the whole living space according to nationalities. That means a solution of those nationality problems which do not always affect this space alone, but extend into practically all countries in South-Eastern Europe.

(3) In this connexion to try to solve the Jewish problem.

(4) To construct economic life and traffic to the benefit of all those living in that space.

(5) To guarantee the security of that empire space; and

(6) To establish a new Polish State which, by its structure and leadership, will give a guarantee that neither a new centre of conflict directed against Germany will come into being nor that a focus of intrigues will be created against Germany and Russia.

In addition, we must try to remove the immediate consequences arising from the War, or at least to mitigate them. . . .

If Europe wants calm and peace, then the European States ought to be grateful that Germany and Russia are prepared to transform this area of disturbance into a zone of peaceful development. . . .

The second task, which I believe is by far the most important, should lead to the establishment not only of the feeling, but also of the certainty, of European security. For this it is necessary that:

(1) There should be absolute clarity with regard to the aims of the European States in the sphere of foreign policy.

### Restoration of German Colonies

AS far as Germany is concerned, it can be stated that the Reich Government is prepared to make its aims in the sphere of foreign policy perfectly clear without any reservations. First of all, we want to say that we consider the Versailles Treaty extinct, and that the German Government, and with it the entire German nation, see no reason and no cause for any further revision except for the demand for such colonial possessions as are due to the Reich and correspond to it.

This means, in the first place, the restoration of the German Colonies. *This request, let it be noted, is not dressed up in* the form of an ultimatum backed by force.

(2) To facilitate the exchange of productions it is necessary to attain a new ordering of markets and a definite regulation of currencies, thus removing step by step the obstacles to free trade.

(3) The most important condition for the real prosperity of European and extra-European economies is the creation of an absolutely guaranteed peace and a feeling of security among all the peoples.

This requires not only a final sanctioning of the status of Europe, but also the reduction of armaments to a reasonable and economically tolerable extent. It is also necessary to define clearly the applicability and the use of certain modern weapons capable of striking at any time into the heart of any nation and so causing a lasting feeling of insecurity. . . .

It must be possible to define the use of gas, of submarines, and also the nature of contraband, in such a manner that the war will be deprived of its terrible character of a fight against women and children and non-combatants in general. It must be possible in connexion with the Red Cross to reach a fundamentally valid international agreement. Only under such conditions can peace return to our thickly populated continent, which, freed from distrust and anxiety, can provide the necessary conditions for real prosperity in economic life.

I do not believe there is a single responsible European statesman who does not desire at the bottom of his heart to see the prosperity of his people. The realization of this wish is only possible in the framework of the general collaboration of the nations of this Continent. The safeguarding of such collaboration must be the aim of every man who is really struggling for the benefit of his people.

TO attain this aim one day the great nations of this Continent must come together and hammer out and guarantee *a comprehensive agreement, which will give to all a feeling of* security and quiet and peace. It is impossible for such a conference to meet without fundamental preparations to clear up isolated points. It is equally impossible for a conference, which must settle the fate of this Continent for centuries, to work amid the roar of guns or under the pressure of mobilized armies. . . .

*Let us hope that the peoples and their leaders who are of* the same opinion will say the word of peace. Let those repulse my hand who regard war as the better solution. As Leader of the German people and Chancellor of the Reich, I can only thank God at this moment that He has so marvellously and wonderfully blessed us in our first hard struggle for our right, and pray to Him that He will guide us and all others on the right path along which not only the German people, but the whole of Europe will find a new happiness and peace.

## *Historic Documents. XXVIII—XXIX*

# *THE ALLIES DEMAND ACTS—NOT WORDS*

Replies to Herr Hitler's suggestions for bringing about a lasting peace were alike in their refusal to place any reliance on his word. We give the most important passages from statements on the subject by the French and British Prime Ministers.

M. DALADIER, IN A BROADCAST, OCTOBER 10, 1939:

WHO will now believe that it was a question of Danzig and the Corridor or of the fate of German minorities? Germany has proved that she wanted either to subjugate Poland by trickery, or defeat her by iron and the sword.

After Austria, Czecho-Slovakia; after Czecho-Slovakia, Poland. All these conquests were but stages on the road which would have led France and Europe to the direst slavery.

I know well that today you hear talk of peace—of a German peace—a peace which would but consecrate the victories of cunning or violence and would not hinder in the least the preparation of new conquests. Summed up, what does the latest Reichstag speech mean? It means this:

"I have annexed Poland. I am satisfied. Let us stop fighting; let us hold a conference to consecrate my conquests and organize peace."

Unfortunately, we have already heard this language before. After the annexation of Austria, Germany told the world: "I have taken Austria. I am not asking for anything more." A few months later she was demanding the Sudetenland, and again her leader told us at Munich that once this demand was satisfied Germany would ask for nothing more. Again, a few months later Germany seized the whole of Czecho-Slovakia. Then, before the Reichstag, he said Germany did not want anything more. After the crushing of Poland it is just the same assurance that we are offered today. . . .

If peace is really wanted—a lasting peace which would give to every home, to every woman and child the joy of living—it is necessary first of all to appease consciences in revolt, to redress the abuses of force, to satisfy honestly the rights and interests of all peoples. . . .

If peace is really wanted—a lasting peace—it is necessary also to understand that the security of nations can only rest on reciprocal guarantees excluding all possibility of surprise and raising a barrier against all attempts at domination.

If peace is really wanted—a lasting peace—it is necessary to understand, in short, that the time has passed when territorial conquests bring welfare to the conquerors. . . .

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, OCTOBER 12:

ON September 1 Herr Hitler violated the Polish frontier and invaded Poland, beating down by force of arms and machinery the resistance of the Polish nation and army. As attested by neutral observers, Polish towns and villages were bombed and shelled into ruins; and civilians were slaughtered wholesale, in contravention, at any rate in the later stages, of all the undertakings of which Herr Hitler now speaks with pride as though he had fulfilled them.

It is after this wanton act of aggression, which has cost so many Polish and German lives, sacrificed to satisfy his own insistence on the use of force, that the German Chancellor now puts forward his proposals.

If there existed any expectation that in these proposals would be included some attempt to make amends for this grievous crime against humanity, following so soon upon the violation of the rights of the Czecho-Slovak nation, it has been doomed to disappointment. . . .

We must take it, then, that the proposals which the German Chancellor puts forward for the establishment of what he calls "the certainty of European security" are to be based on recognition of his conquests and his right to do what he pleases with the conquered.

It would be impossible for Great Britain to accept any such basis without forfeiting her honour and abandoning her claim that international disputes should be settled by discussion and not by force.

The passages in the speech designed to give fresh assurances to Herr Hitler's neighbours I pass over, since they will know what value should be attached to them by reference to the similar assurances he has given in the past.

It would be easy to quote sentences from his speeches in 1935, 1936 and 1938 stating in the most definite terms his determination not to annex Austria or conclude an Anschluss with her not to fall upon Czecho-Slovakia, and not to make any further territorial claims in Europe after the Sudetenland question had been settled in September, 1938.

Nor can we pass over Herr Hitler's radical departure from the long-professed principles of his policy and creed, as instanced by the inclusion in the German Reich of many millions of Poles and Czechs, despite his repeated professions to the contrary, and by the pact with the Soviet Union concluded after his repeated and violent denunciations of Bolshevism.

This repeated disregard of his word and these sudden reversals of policy bring me to the fundamental difficulty in dealing with the wider proposals in the German Chancellor's speech. The plain truth is that, after our past experience, it is no longer possible to rely upon the unsupported word of the present German Government.

It is no part of our policy to exclude from her rightful place in Europe a Germany which will live in amity and confidence with other nations.

### Rights of All Countries to be Respected

ON the contrary, we believe that no effective remedy can be found for the world's ills that does not take account of the just claims and needs of all countries, and whenever the time may come to draw the lines of a new peace settlement, his Majesty's Government would feel that the future would hold little hope unless such a settlement could be reached through the method of negotiation and agreement.

I am certain that all the peoples of Europe, including the people of Germany, long for peace, a peace which will enable them to live their lives without fear, and to devote their energies and their gifts to the development of their culture, the pursuit of their ideals, and the improvement of their material prosperity.

The peace which we are determined to secure, however, must be a real and settled peace, not an uneasy truce interrupted by constant alarms and repeated threats.

What stands in the way of such a peace? It is the German Government, and the German Government alone, for it is they who by repeated acts of aggression have robbed all Europe of tranquillity and implanted in the hearts of all their neighbours an ever-present sense of insecurity and fear.

I WOULD sum up the attitude of his Majesty's Government as follows:

Herr Hitler rejected all suggestions for peace until he had overwhelmed Poland, as he had previously overthrown Czecho-Slovakia. Peace conditions cannot be acceptable which began by condoning aggression.

The proposals in the German Chancellor's speech are vague and uncertain, and contain no suggestion for righting the wrongs done to Czecho-Slovakia and to Poland.

Even if Herr Hitler's proposals were more closely defined and contained suggestions to right these wrongs, it would still be necessary to ask by what practical means the German Government intend to convince the world that aggression will cease and that pledges will be kept.

Past experience has shown that no reliance can be placed upon the promises of the present German Government. Accordingly acts, not words alone, must be forthcoming before we the British peoples, and France, our gallant and trusted Ally, would be justified in ceasing to wage war to the utmost of our strength.

Only when world confidence is restored will it be possible to find, as we would wish to do with the aid of all who show good will, solutions of those questions which disturb the world, which stand in the way of disarmament, retard the restoration of trade, and prevent the improvement of the well-being of the peoples.

THE issue is therefore plain. Either the German Government must give convincing proof of the sincerity of their desire for peace by definite acts and by the provision of effective guarantees of their intention to fulfil their undertakings, or we must persevere in our duty to the end. It is for Germany to make her choice.

Chapter 17

# HITLER'S GREAT PEACE OFFENSIVE FAILS

*Opening of the Peace Offensive—Fuehrer's Inescapable Dilemma—Boast and Menace in Danzig—Neutral Reactions—The Reichstag Harangue—Specious and Plausible Proposals—Italy Holds Aloof—France's 'Unfailing Fidelity'—Chamberlain's Firm Rejoinder—Outspoken Comments of the United States—Ribbentrop's Bathetic Tirade—The Koenigswusterhausen Hoax*

CONTAINING seeds of danger for the Allied cause, but in the long run futile, was the German "peace offensive" of September–October, 1939. Nazi propaganda was turned on through all possible channels for home as well as foreign consumption. It was a campaign of half-truths, lies, peaceful protestations and dark threats, the object of which was to get an armistice and some measure of demobilization for the discussion of peace terms, before the full force of the Allies' offensive should be exerted against Germany

The danger lay less in any probability of Hitler's impudent terms being accepted than in a weakening of morale and even some division of counsels as between France and Britain. A review of the significant statements of Hitler and his satellites will show that such possibilities—faint though they seemed to the democratic peoples—were hopefully envisaged by the enemy.

Actually the peace offensive began in August, in a last-minute attempt to persuade the Allies (but especially Britain) that Poland was the warmonger and not one more victim of German imperialism; and that it certainly was not worth their while to challenge the might of Germany over a purely local affair. The method resembled that of similar German propaganda before and after each fresh act of aggression against a neighbouring people, but this time there was much more in it, because Germany was now fully prepared for war, and had been definitely warned that the Allies would fight for Polish independence. The Allies realized, perhaps too late, that their forces could not save Poland from terrible destruction; and the German leaders persuaded themselves that this, combined with the threat of what Germany could do in a new war, would at least cause the Chamberlain and Daladier governments to be embarrassed by public opinion.

**Peace Offensive Begins**

In those gloomy months just before Britain and France declared war occurred the interviews of the British Ambassador, Sir Nevile Henderson, with Hitler, Goering and Ribbentrop, reported in the British White Paper (*see* Historic Documents, No. 30). These revealed not merely the familiar duplicity of Germany's belated pretence of offering Poland new negotiations, but clearly indicated the lines of the proposed attack upon Allied morale.

With his stupid and humourless brand of cunning, the Fuehrer had actually offered to guarantee the safety of the British Empire with all the might of Germany—in return for Britain's abandonment of France and a free hand in Central Europe. Hitler's vocal energy was now devoted mainly to arguments of Poland's guilt and the needlessness of any conflict between Britain and Germany. Field-Marshal Goering also tried to impress upon the British Ambassador that Germany was invincible, that France would soon break up in a prolonged war, and that Germany could do more damage to Britain than Britain could do to Germany.

Behind his words, and behind Hitler's ultimate stiffening against negotiation with the Poles, lay the secret scheme of an agreement with Soviet Russia, which, while depriving Britain and France of a potential ally in the East, held out the promise of essential supplies to counteract the effects of the inevitable British blockade. At least, this was the political purpose of the ill-considered pact which Ribbentrop signed in Moscow; and if the German leaders really believed that it meant important material help, as distinct from the negative effect of cancelling any possible agreement between the Allies and Russia, they were undeceived in the first few weeks of the war. Stalin gave away nothing to Germany, but took advantage of the situation to make Central Europe and the Soviet's western frontiers quite safe from German aggression. Since Germany was cast for the part of a powerful friend of Soviet Russia, the Nazi leaders had to look pleasant while all hopes of any incursions towards Rumania or the Ukraine faded away; and had even to submit to the expulsion of German power and influence from the eastern Baltic.

Germany suffered these set-backs—which could not have been worse had the Soviet been openly at war on the side of the Allies—because, once war was declared by Britain and France, the whole structure of Nazi power politics began to crumble. The last desperate hope of the Nazi gangsters was to cajole and threaten their way out of the impasse while still in possession of some of the booty.

At a Berlin armaments factory, on September 9, Goering broadcast a characteristic speech (*see* Historic Documents, No. 14). He repeated that German policy had not injured Britain, and declared that Germany was quite as ready for an acceptable peace as it was to fight under the Fuehrer for victory. Then he let out the next cat from the German bag of propaganda. Rather scornful of the effects of British military intervention, he announced that the British motto was: "We shall fight to the last Frenchman."

**Goering's Will for 'Peace'**

When the French armies began their advance towards the Siegfried Line outposts, they read notices on the forts: "We won't shoot if you don't." Some people in England believed that this was a genuine sign of impending revolt by the German troops. But, though the sentiment inspiring the notices may have been quite genuine, no inscriptions of such a nature would have been allowed if they had not been serving a purpose of German politics. Radio loudspeakers from the Rhine also blared at the French troops that Britain was Germany's only enemy, and not France. In retaliation, French radio stations blared into Germany records of Hitler's recent speeches which supplied dramatic texts for distrust of German promises.

Fortunately, German propaganda never seriously menaced the morale of the French army, though it could still reach the civilian populations of France and Britain—not to speak of powerful neutral countries—and exploit the submerged but still strong campaign of a muddled pacifism. The most effective means to this end was another exercise of Hitler's vocal chords. It was now urgently necessary to undermine the purpose of the Allies. The U-boat campaign had begun with the politically disastrous torpedoing of the "Athenia"; by the third week of the war, however, it must already have become quite clear to the Nazi [illegible] this campaign would be [illegible]




**PROPAGANDA TO FRENCH SOLDIERS AGAINST FIGHTING**

*This Nazi banner, displayed on the right bank of the Rhine to French troops on the opposite side, is typical of the naïve German attempts to split the Allies. It announces: "We will only reply if you attack." Another method was to post loudspeaker vans which were set to broadcast passages from Hitler's "peace speech." The French replies were of such a nature that they could not possibly be printed here!*

*Photo, E.N.A.*

So on September 19 the big battle of the peace offensive was opened by the Fuehrer in a frenzied speech, made with typical German arrogance in Danzig, while Warsaw and Polish resistance were in their death throes. This speech was mainly boast and menace. There would have been no war, he said, but for Britain's support of Poland, which merely sacrificed Poland; and Germany now was able, with Russian backing, to carry on a long war. Once more we were told that Germany's political aims were strictly limited. "If England continued the war now, she would reveal as her real aim that she wanted war against the German Government." He felt honoured to be regarded as the representative of that regime.

"Fundamentally, I have so trained the German people," he said, "that any government that is praised by our enemies would be rejected by Germans. . . . I am proud to be attacked by them. But if they believe that they can divide the German people from me then they consider the German people to be as characterless and stupid as themselves."

Then came the usual combination of a threat and an appeal to the pacifism of one of the allied nations:

"When England says that the war will last three years, then I can only say I am sorry for France. If it lasts three years the word capitulation will not arise on our side, nor in the fourth, fifth sixth and seventh years. . . . England has already started war against women and children. Her naval arm is there for that purpose, but do not deceive yourselves. The moment may come when we use a weapon which is not yet known and with which we could not ourselves be attacked. Let us hope that we will not be forced to use this means. It is to be hoped that no one will then complain in the name of humanity."

The British Government through the Ministry of Information immediately answered the speech by quoting Hitler's anti-Soviet declarations, and his statements in the Reichstag during 1938 that the Polish State could live in amity with Germany, and that Germany "recognizes the Polish State as the home of a great patriotic nation with the understanding and the cordial friendship of candid nationalists." The special point of these references to Poland was that Hitler and Stalin were now carrying out their partition of Poland.

The effects abroad of Hitler's speech were negligible, and it was regarded in most neutral circles as a preparation of the unfortunate German people for worse privations and losses yet to come. In the United States the reaction was feebler than any so far registered to a speech by Hitler since the summer of 1938. Mr. Cordell Hull, the Secretary of State, told his press conference the next day that he had been too busy to listen to it, and so was unable to make any comment; and the President himself said he had started listening, but had switched off because some visitors had arrived.

On September 21 Roosevelt made a historic speech appealing to the Washington Legislature to repeal the embargo clauses of the Neutrality Law (*see* Historic Documents, No. 25), and this was by far the most important neutral declaration of policy made in the last part of September. But an even more significant response to Hitler's Danzig speech was a rush of buying that immediately set in on Wall Street, the so-called "war-babies"—stocks affected by the armaments and war supplies industries—gaining one to eight dollars. It meant that business interests in the United States interpreted Hitler's attitude as making a long war certain.

The Danzig speech was ineffective. Perhaps neutral opinion was correct in construing it as mainly intended to stiffen German morale.

**The Opening Gambit**

Certainly it was soon seen as merely an opening gambit. The big move came at the end of the first week of October. Summoning the Reichstag to act as usual as his studio audience for a broadcast speech, on Friday, October 6, Hitler talked to his tame Nazis there assembled and at the same time spoke to the world (*see* Historic Documents, No. 27). It was an astonishing and at times an almost demented speech, which no sane statesman would make.

This time there was a much more explicit appeal to pacifist sentiment abroad, as well as the usual mixture of glorification of German arms and renewed declarations of non-aggressive intentions. The "most important German political demand" (but not one that should be insisted on by force) was the return of colonies, made necessary by present-day distribution of the world's raw materials. A Polish State was to be built up and guaranteed by Germany and Russia, and it would be a State that could not threaten Germany. A just and permanent German frontier was to be created, and a re-ordering of the peoples in territory under the German Reich and throughout South-Eastern Europe. There was to be rectification of the rules of warfare. War would have to be made less terrible, by new definitions of the functions of air forces and submarines, and of contraband control.

The belated emphasis upon the need to restrict the terrors of warfare—an attempt to "steal the thunder" of Germany's political opponents—went with the renewed promise of peaceful intentions and the impudent statement:

"If Europe wants calm and peace, then the European States ought to be grateful that Germany and Russia are prepared to transform this area of disturbance (i.e.

Poland) into a zone of peaceful development. For the German Government such a task will mean that Germany will have her hands full for the coming fifty years.'

Going back (but only for a moment in this procession of disjointed arguments) to an earlier, pre-war attitude, Hitler reasserted that Germany had no aggressive intentions towards England and the British Empire, as if he considered this quite sufficient reason for British non-interference, since he had agreed that the return of colonies was a question for negotiation. But the main appeal to pacifism was addressed to the French:

"It is impossible for any French statesman to get up and say that I have ever made a claim on France which was incompatible with French honour or French interests. On the contrary, instead of demands, I have always expressed to France the wish to bury once and for all the old enmity and to allow these two nations, with their great historic past, to find their way to one another."

Naturally the orator forgot (or at least refrained from recalling) that France's honour and interests as an ally of Poland and of Czecho-Slovakia were very deeply concerned in the ruthless invasion of these countries by Germany, in contempt of Hitler's own promises. But the whole speech was a farrago of such distorted values, which explains why the invidious appeals to the Allies' separate interests and to dissident elements of pacifist feeling sounded so flat without the confines of the excited Reichstag. It is enough to observe that Hitler concluded by blasphemously thanking God for blessing them in their first hard struggle for right.

What really stands out in the speech was bound up with the superficially reasonable proposals for re-ordering Europe and the rules of warfare. Hitler maintained that it was a necessary preliminary to the consideration of these proposals that the Powers should meet in conference, "but it is impossible to call such a conference under the pressure of war or even of mobilized armies." In other words, the Nazi government wanted immediately an armistice and demobilization. There was every reason to suppose that the desire was sincere, for Germany no longer had any hope of the *Blitzkrieg*, or lightning war, the results of which in Poland had been so satisfactory to the Nazis. Confronted with the Maginot Line, the British and French navies, and the rapidly expanding air forces of the Allies, the Nazis realized that their "power politics" were in danger of being smashed by the staying power of their opponents. Hitler tried once more to reach the pacifists with the argument that

'the present conditions on the Western Front cannot last. One day France will destroy Saarbruecken, and Germany will in return bomb Mulhausen. And so it will continue. More and more guns will be brought into the battle and destruction will increase. Whatever the guns do not destroy will be exterminated by bombers."

In the press of Italy, Germany's former partner in power politics, warm approval of the speech was expressed, but without any official confirmation and with renewed intimations that the Italian Government would take no initiative in sponsoring proposals that were so little likely to be seriously considered by Poland's allies. One point (made by the "Messagero"), that the Versailles Treaty was dead and that any resurrected Poland of the

**'DANZIG GREETS ITS LEADER'**

**So runs the wording of the banner hung across this Danzig street as Hitler makes his triumphal entry into the former Free City on September 19, 1939. Buildings were everywhere bedecked with Nazi emblems, and the Danzig Nazis thronged the streets to greet their Fuehrer, who had by force incorporated the city into the German Reich.**

*Photo, Keystone*





**CIANO RECEIVES THE FUEHRER'S MESSAGE**

**Hitler is seen above with Count Ciano (left) and Ribbentrop (right) when the Fuehrer gave his so-called "peace terms" to Count Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, to convey to Mussolini, who Hitler hoped would act as a mediator**

*Photo, Wide World*

future could not be the same as the old, had been realized in the democratic countries also. Hitler also obtained some results by opening afresh the arguments that the Allies must state their aims more definitely. But on the whole the reactions were again a defeat for Nazi propaganda.

**Italy Stands Aloof**

The refusal of Italy to sponsor Hitler's pretended offer of peace was paralleled by the official attitude of the United States, where it was pointed out that the Government still recognized the Polish Ambassador, Count Potocki, and the Czecho-Slovak Minister, M. Hurban, and had no intention of appearing to countenance the annexation of their countries by Germany.

Not content with the usual firm and logical press comments, the French, two days after the speech, published the text of messages exchanged between President Lebrun and M. Raczkiewicz, the newly appointed President of the Polish Republic, concerning the constitution of the Polish Government that had been formed in Paris. The French Prime Minister, M. Daladier, countersigned the French President's assurance of France's "unfailing sentiments of fidelity" and "the faith of the French people in the future of justice, as well as France's determination to recoil from no sacrifices to ensure it."

In Holland a report appeared in the "Telegraaf" that German official quarters hoped for the contribution of influential foreign circles to the signing of an armistice, a hope inspired by recalling the earlier offer of Queen Wilhelmina and King Leopold to mediate. But the war had been going on now for nearly seven weeks, and massive concentrations of German forces on the Western Front were held to indicate an imminent attack on a big scale. This, as subsequent developments in October showed, was the beginning of a German menace to the Belgian and Dutch frontiers also, and there was no satisfaction of the unofficially expressed German hopes that these small and dangerously situated neutral states would "carry the baby."

Possibly the customary outspokenness of the United States press, which had closely reflected American opinion since the previous August, confirmed the cautious attitude of all Germany's neutral neighbours. And the general anti-Nazi sentiment of the States was reflected in the comment of two well-known Isolationist Senators—Nye, a Republican, said: "He has lied so often . . ."; King, a Democrat: "I don't believe in Hitler's sincerity." Or, as the "New York Daily Mirror" put it: "No man can disagree with much that Hitler has said—if you forget who is saying it"; and, more categorically, the "New York Herald-Tribune": "It is incredible that any truce should be erected on this foundation."

Just as a large-scale military offensive which fails may secure a local gain, Hitler's peace offensive did once more stir up criticism of the vagueness of the Allies' plans, as distinct from the principles enunciated by the Prime Ministers of Britain and France. And there were some citizens of the Allied countries who certainly shared the view expressed for many Americans by the "New York Daily News": "It is foolish to fight a war of extermination to avoid a war of extermination. And at the end neither side will be able to obtain as good a peace as both could obtain now by negotiation." This assertion must have been greatly weakened in the minds of intelligent Americans by the knowledge that their own Government completely shared the attitude of the French and British













*Photos, E N A ; Photopress; Associated Press*

## HITLER BEFORE THE LENS OF HISTORY

1. The Fuehrer in his study at his Berchtesgaden retreat, on the Obersalzburg. 2. Addressing an enthralled audience of Nazi youth. 3. A photograph taken in October, 1939 showing Hitler and Goering reviewing the situation in Poland. 4. He greets Goebbels on the latter's birthday. 5. The Fuehrer with a group of officers in a Warsaw street shortly after the fall of the city. 6. In his private air liner flying over the Polish battlefields.

Governments. The truth, which was generally recognized, was that peace talk was a German war-weapon. The aptest comment would have been Hitler's remark in Berlin to Sir Nevile Henderson just before the war started: "If you wish to obtain your objectives by force, you must be strong; if you wish to obtain them by negotiation, you must be still stronger."

In the House of Commons, on October 12, Mr. Chamberlain reaffirmed the Allied policy of establishing a new order in Europe, and quoted from M. Daladier's broadcast reply to Hitler: "We have taken up arms against aggression; we shall not lay them down until we have sure guarantees of security—a security which cannot be called in question every six months." Hitler's proposals, said Mr. Chamberlain, "were based on the recognition of his conquests and his right to do what he pleased with the conquered. Great Britain could not accept them without forfeiting honour and principle."

**Allied Policy Reaffirmed**

The Premier carried the House of Commons with him, except for Mr. Lansbury's sentimental pacifists and Mr. Maxton's group of two members. Another, more interesting and unexpected exception was Mr. Lloyd George, who aroused perhaps unmerited expressions of resentment by arguing that the Government should seriously consider whether a conference was possible, now that any capitulation to German threats on the Munich model was out of the question.

Mr. Arthur Henderson (Labour), on October 9, had asked a more pertinent question — whether the Government intended to publish jointly with the French Government a specific statement of war aims based on the principles they had proclaimed; and Mr. Chamberlain had answered cautiously that the Allied Governments were in accord on those principles, which had been "more than once stated by both Governments. No doubt as time goes on both Governments will consider whether their war aims shall be stated in more specific form." A supplementary question by Miss Eleanor Rathbone (Ind. Universities), unanswered except by ministerial shouts of "No," was whether the Prime Minister was aware of a strong and growing demand in the country for a more specific statement of war aims.

**Franco-British Accord**

Mr. Lloyd George's plea for consideration of the possibility of a conference, but without any armistice or demobilization, met with no serious support either in the House or the country, although he subsequently repeated his argument and corrected vicious misrepresentations of it as a defeatist proposal. No sensible person suspected Mr. Lloyd George of any inclination to compromise with Nazi aggression, but he certainly was suspected of trying to embarrass the Government, which he had in the past severely criticized for its weak foreign policy. Moreover, as our War Premier in the 1914–18 war, Mr. Lloyd George had been the strongest individual driving force in politics for a decisive issue. It was recalled that in 1917, when prospects of a victorious end for them had faded, the Germans began similar tactics: von Kühlmann, then Foreign Minister, put forward a suggestion for a conference which caused some heart-searching in England, and produced influential support. In his "War Memoirs," Mr. Lloyd George alluded to this incident and quoted with approval from a speech made by Mr. Bonar Law, who was his deputy while he was in France. Von Kühlmann's proposal, and a "peace" resolution of the Reichstag were met by Bonar Law in these words:

"If a patched-up peace comes now, with the German military machine still unbroken, still in the hands of the people who directed it for the twenty years before the war, have we any security? I think we have the reverse. Have we any security that the same danger which has ruined this generation will not ruin our children when this war is over?"

Miss Rathbone, more conscious of support than Mr. Lloyd George, also returned to the attack, writing a letter from the House of Commons which appeared in the "Manchester Guardian" on October 23. While strongly supporting the demand for a specific statement of our war aims, she admitted that

"all except absolute pacifists will agree that Herr Hitler's preposterous terms had to be rejected. Acceptance would have meant for us and France complete loss of honour and no gain of future security. If we and France stated our terms, almost certainly Hitler would reject them, but they would have been worth stating if they convinced doubters at home and abroad that we had missed no chance, however small, of achieving peace with honour and security without prolonged war."

This argument, sometimes in more extreme forms, was stated by other knowledgeable people; but up to the latter part of October the only notable consequence of Hitler's "peace offensive" and the Allies' response was an added virulence in Nazi propaganda against Britain. In this Mr. Chamberlain was favoured with absurd and groundless abuse of the sort that had previously been reserved for Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden.

During the third week of October it was noticed also that on the Western Front German artillery refrained from shelling French gun emplacements, or tanks that were inside the French frontier. And yet German concentrations went on obviously with no attempt to conceal them, increasing the expectancy of a huge offensive. Before the month expired, however, this seemed doomed to be held up by bad weather conditions. Probably the concentrations were both military and political in purpose—preparations for military action when circumstances favoured the Germans, and support meanwhile for the menaces of German propaganda, culminating in a tirade by Herr von Ribbentrop on October 24.

The German Foreign Minister by this time was held in such contempt by neutral peoples as well as the Allies, that his lies and threats came as a bathetic tail-piece to the Fuehrer's hysterical confusion of right and wrong. After Chamberlain's firm speech on October 12, neutral journalists had already been told in Berlin that England's sole purpose was to destroy Germany and the German nation, and that only intervention by some neutral Power could now prevent unlimited carnage.

**Ribbentrop's Bathos**

The German people heard nothing of Mr. Chamberlain's speech, either by radio or in the press, until the next day, when the results of a night's preparation of the propaganda machine took the following form. While the neutral world was told of British wickedness, the German papers told their readers that, in the words of the "Berliner Allgemeine Zeitung," "Chamberlain proves his responsibility for the war. He is forcing us to fight, and the future will show who will win."

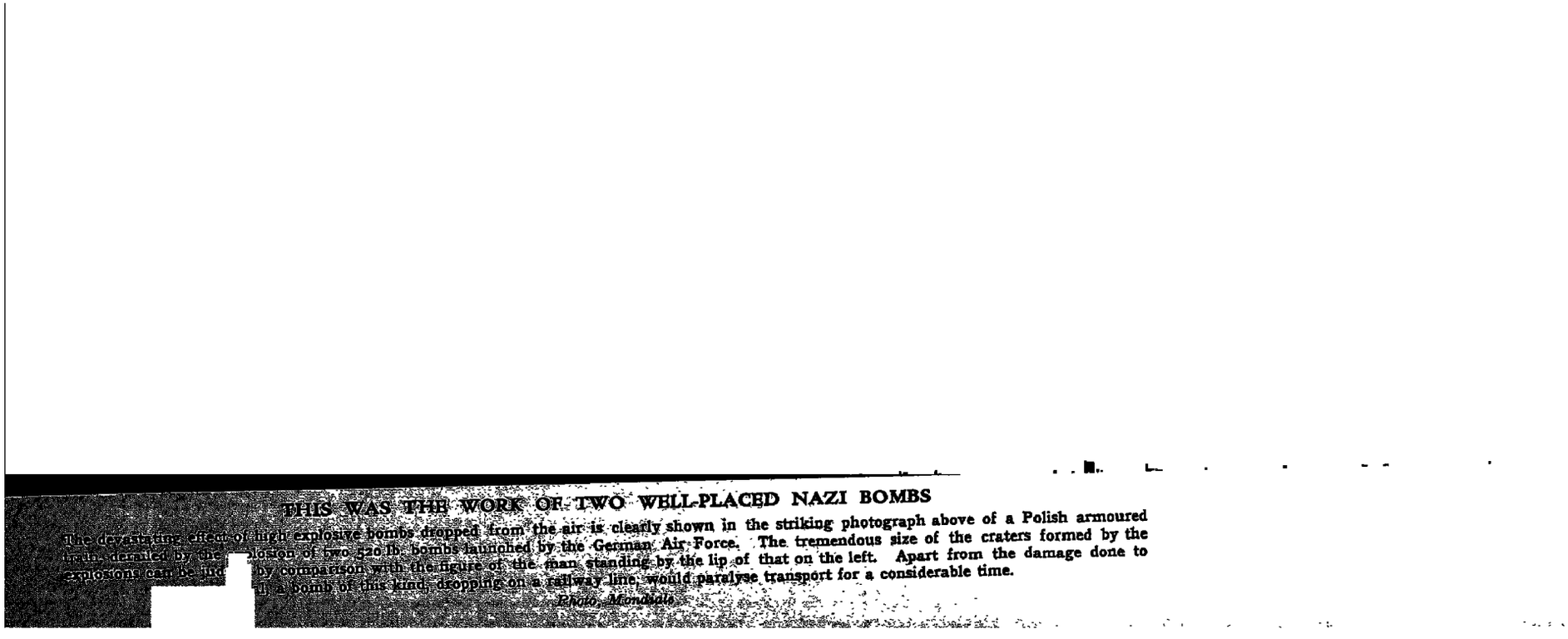
More significant and definite than the Ribbentrop anticlimax was a statement by Otto Dietrich, head of the Nazi Press section, after the official propaganda by radio had promised Britain "war in its fiercest form henceforth," and had characterized Mr. Chamberlain's remarks as "impudent insults." Points that Dietrich gave to neutral journalists included the statement that war on an unprecedented scale could only be avoided if the neutrals, headed by the United States, persuaded Britain and France to meet Germany over the conference table, especially by making it clear to Britain that she could expect no support from the United States. Other points, to reinforce this main argument, were that Germany knew Russia would keep all her promises of help; and that Germany



*Photo, Sport & General*

**POLISH LEADERS IN PARIS**

After the flight into exile of the Polish Government, the President of Poland, President Moscicki, [illegible] resigned in favour of M. Wladyslaw Raczkiewicz, who was in Paris. In that city a new Polish Govern[illegible] formed, with General Sikorski as Prime Minister and Minister for War. Above, M. Raczkie[illegible] General Sikorski are seen leaving the Church of the Assumption, in Paris, [illegible]



**THIS WAS THE WORK OF TWO WELL-PLACED NAZI BOMBS**

The devastating effect of high explosive bombs dropped from the air is clearly shown in the striking photograph above of a Polish armoured train, derailed by the explosion of two 320 lb. bombs launched by the German Air Force. The tremendous size of the craters formed by the explosions can be judged by comparison with the figure of the man standing by the lip of that on the left. Apart from the damage done to the line by a bomb of this kind, dropping on a railway line, would paralyse transport for a considerable time.

*Keystone, Mondiale*



*Photo Keystone*

ELEPHANTINE HUMOUR OF GERMANY'S SECOND [illegible]

Field-Marshal Goering is seen above speaking to munition workers on September 9, 1939. His remarks on the economic situation in Germany brought little comfort to his hearers, and when, with an attempt at humour, [illegible] man himself, he [illegible] "With less meat we shall all get thinner and so need less [illegible]" [illegible] probably many among his audience who wondered whether he was [illegible]

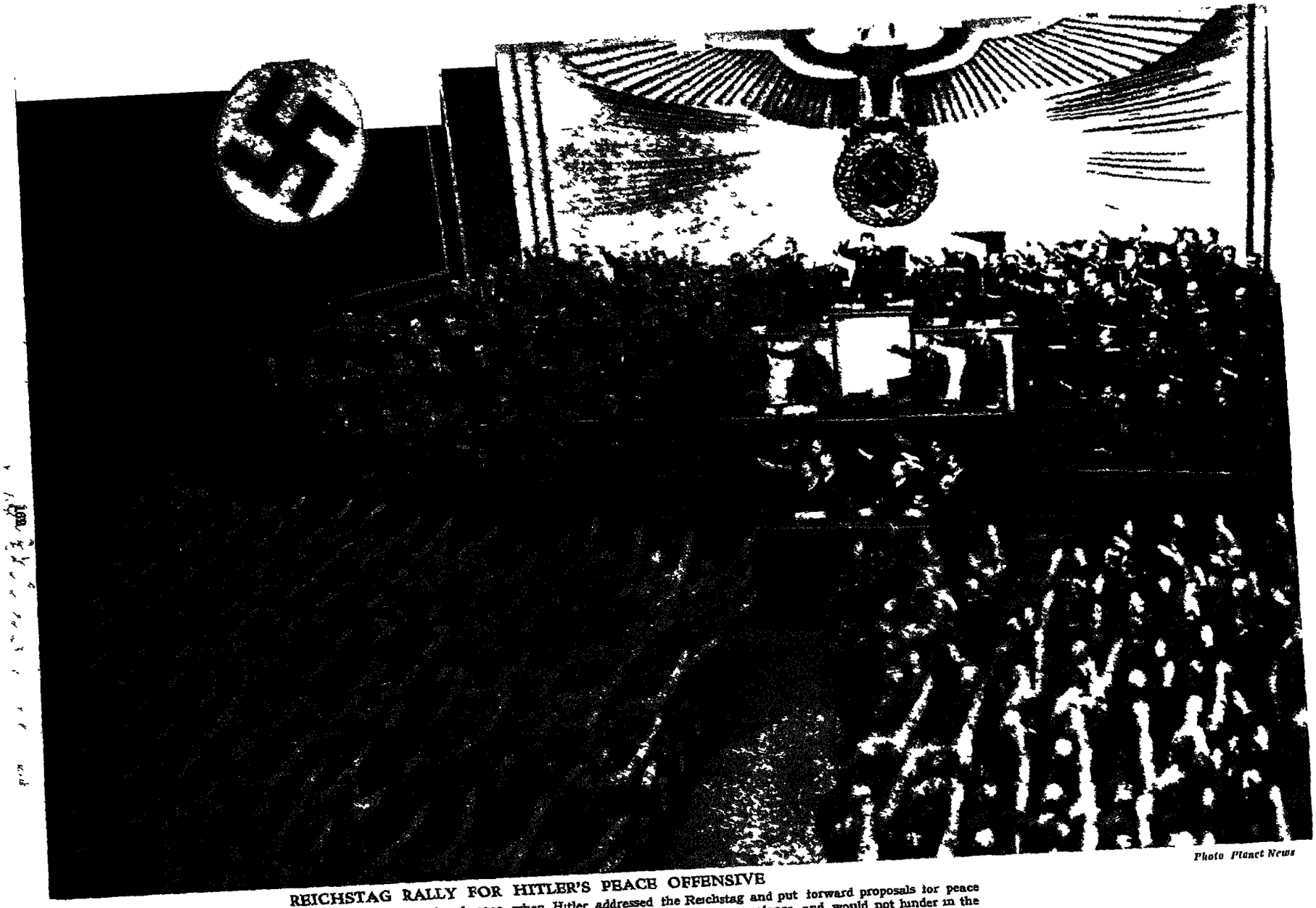


Photo Planet News

**REICHSTAG RALLY FOR HITLER'S PEACE OFFENSIVE**

Here is the scene at the Kroll Opera House, Berlin, on October 6, 1939, when Hitler addressed the Reichstag and put forward proposals for peace which were denounced by M Daladier as "a peace which would but consecrate the victories of cunning or violence, and would not hinder in the least the *preparation of new conquests*" The deputies are seen with their hands raised in the Nazi salute, on the left, in the front row, is Hitler, with Hess and Ribbentrop at his side Goering is in the centre presiding over the assembly

still did not wish war and at present would not declare war but merely defend herself. This, however, might take the form of "a defensive offensive." The culmination of this Nazi fantasy was a promise to leave ample time for neutral states to take action.

**The Anti-British 'Hate'**

Many pages might be filled with choice specimens of anti-British propaganda sent out after this first response to the rejection of Hitler's "peace offer." And they could all be fitted into the same framework of a method of conducting power-politics which began to fail from the moment that Germany was firmly opposed by the Allies. Much of the Nazi propaganda was necessary inside Germany, where the wish for peace and the absolute consternation at the previously unrealized consequences of Hitler's latest move were startlingly betrayed by the reception of peace rumours which swept through Germany on October 10, after Hitler's Reichstag speech. An amazing hoax led to the revelation of civilian Germany's nervous state of mind.

The rumours, joyfully accepted, were that an armistice was imminent; that Mr. Chamberlain had resigned and had been succeeded by Mr. Lloyd George; and that King George had abdicated in favour of the Duke of Windsor. These stories had been broadcast as ordinary news from the Koenigswusterhausen station by an unknown interloper. The station, according to the Berlin correspondent of the "Stockholms-Tidningen," was being used for programmes normally broadcast from the Deutschlandsender station, which was undergoing repairs. The Wilhelmstrasse was angry and alarmed at the public demonstrations of enthusiasm.

Before the end of October it was clear that the Nazi peace offensive had failed, and the Koenigswusterhausen hoax betrayed the fact that by too much lying and suppression of truth the German home front had become far more vulnerable to Allied propaganda than were the Allies or the neutrals to German falsehoods.

The peace offensive, and its earlier successful practice by the irresponsible Fuehrer, is based upon old and universal principles of strategy: take your enemies by surprise, and, if possible, take them one at a time by dividing them. Practised by all military commanders from Alexander of Macedon to the cunning Wallenstein, the strategy had never been thoroughly applied in times of nominal "peace," and Hitler's successes can be seen in restrospect to have depended upon this gangster method of holding a loaded gun and asking or taking what you want without fighting. So long as the threat was sufficient, all the advantage lay with the Power prepared to risk war. But once war began, and the antagonists could fight on at least equal terms, the political side of this strategy (which is unblushingly described in Hitler's testament, "Mein Kampf") begins to act like a boomerang that hurtles back to the thrower. Hitler bewildered and mentally ruined the majority of German citizens, and left the Nazi Government without a hope of any successes abroad by political propaganda. The one success that it claimed—the pact with Soviet Russia—failed to intimidate the democracies, and ended Germany's career of conquest to the East and South-East. After two months of war it could be said that the whole world distrusted the Nazi Government, and the whole world believed in the ultimate defeat of German power, not only because it would be unable to keep pace with the power of the armed and fighting democracies, but because it was completely immoral, and, as Pope Pius XII stated in his first encyclical, the denial of universal morality had become a radical evil of today. In this letter, issued on October 27, the Pope wrote a satisfying postcript to the foregoing review of Germany's power-politics:

"It is quite true that power based on such weak and unsteady foundations can attain at times in fortuitous circumstances material successes that are apt to arouse wonder in superficial observers. But the moment comes when the inevitable law triumphs and strikes down everything constructed upon a hidden or open disproportion between the greatness of the material and outward success and the weakness of the inward value and of its moral foundation. . . . The human race is bound together by reciprocal ties, moral and juridical, ordained for the welfare of all, and it is obvious that the claim to absolute autonomy for the State stands in open opposition to this natural law and leaves the stability of international relations at the mercy of the will of rulers, while it destroys the possibility of true union and fruitful collaboration. Thus it is indispensable that the peoples observe these principles of international law which demand respect for corresponding rights to independence, life, the possibility of civilized development and fidelity to compacts sanctioned in conformity with the principles of the law of nations."



**THE DEMOCRACIES REPLY TO HITLER'S PEACE OFFENSIVE**

Here are three of the leading spokesmen of the Allied powers In the top photograph Mr. Neville Chamberlain is seen chatting to Britain's Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, outside the Foreign Office. Immediately above is M. Edouard Daladier, head of the French Cabinet, photographed in his office just before beginning his broadcast to the French nation on October 10, 1939, in reply to Hitler's Reichstag speech.

*Photos, Wide World; Sport & General*

# *Diary of the War*

## *SEPTEMBER, 1939*

**September 1.** Poland invaded by Germany. Britain and France deliver urgent warnings to Hitler to withdraw. General mobilization proclaimed in Britain and France. Evacuation of British schoolchildren begins.

**September 2.** Bill for compulsory military service between ages of 18 and 41 passed. Warsaw bombed six times. British Government receives pledges of support from Canada, Australia, New Zealand and 46 Indian rulers.

**September 3.** Britain and France each present an ultimatum to Germany. At 11.15 a.m. Mr. Chamberlain broadcasts that, as no favourable reply has been received, Britain is now at war with Germany. Fierce fighting in Poland. British War Cabinet created. The King broadcasts to the nation. British liner "Athenia" sunk by U-boat. Australia and New Zealand declare war.

**September 4.** Fleet blockade begins. R.A.F. drop 6,000,000 copies of leaflet over north and west Germany. R.A.F. raid Wilhelmshaven and damage two battleships. Poland admits loss of Czestochowa. France starts operations. Mr. Chamberlain broadcasts message to the German people.

**September 5.** Important towns south of Polish corridor captured. Over 3,000,000 copies of leaflet dropped over Ruhr area. British steamer "Bosnia" sunk. Three German ships, potential raiders, sunk.

**September 6.** Enemy aircraft arrive off East Coast, but turn back before British fighters make contact. French troops penetrate German territory in direction of Saarbruecken. Two armies established on 125-mile front from Rhine to Moselle. Polish Government leave Warsaw for Lublin. Cracow falls. British ship "Royal Sceptre" sunk. Third successful reconnaissance over Germany. South Africa declares war.

**September 7.** Germans reach Pultusk, 30 miles north of Warsaw. Garrison at Westerplatte surrenders. British ship "Olivegrove" torpedoed.

**September 8.** Poland admits retreat from Lodz, Piotrkow and Rozan, but denies that Germans have entered Warsaw. British steamer "Manaar" and two other British and one French sunk. Fourth reconnaissance flight over Germany.

**September 9.** French continue local advances on Western Front. Fifth reconnaissance flight over Central Germany. R.A.F. raid island of Sylt, German air base. Goering makes "peace" broadcast from Berlin armament factory.

**September 10.** Germans withdraw from neighbourhood of Warsaw. Fifteen bombing raids over capital. French secure further gains on Western Front. Canada declares war.

**September 11.** Attack on Warsaw checked. Advance on Lwow held up. Polish Government move to Brest-Litovsk. French troops achieve further progress.

**September 12.** Supreme War Council meet in France. French make further progress. Officially stated that British troops are now in France. In Poland, Germans attack towards Bialystok. Main German force held up at Modlin. British ships "Inverliffey," "Firby," "Blairlogie" and "Gartavon" torpedoed. Finnish barque "Olivebank" sunk by drifting mine.

**September 13.** Germany announces that open towns would be bombed. German advance east of Warsaw. French War Cabinet formed, with M. Daladier as Prime Minister and Minister for War and for Foreign Affairs.

**September 14.** Germans claim capture of Gdynia and to be now encircling Warsaw. French launch new offensive. British ships "Vancouver City" and "British Influence" sunk. Official Kremlin organ "Pravda" animadverts on Poland's "brutal" treatment of minorities, especially Ukrainians and White Russians.

**September 15.** Germans claim to have surrounded Warsaw. Ruthless bombing of open towns begins. French troops reach outposts of Siegfried Line.

**September 16.** Germans claim capture of Przemysl and Bialystok. "Fanad Head," "Davara," "Rudyard Kipling" and "Cheyenne" sunk by U-boats. Belgian steamer "Alex van Opstal" sunk near Weymouth.

**September 17.** Soviet troops invade Poland without warning. Polish front collapses under crushing German attacks. Polish Government remove to Kuty. Germany presents terms for surrender. German attacks on Western Front repulsed with loss. British aircraft carrier "Courageous" sunk.

**September 18.** Soviet and German troops meet near Brest-Litovsk and issue a joint communiqué. Attack on Warsaw resumed. Polish Government cross into Rumania. French troops advance within three miles of Saarbruecken. Two R.A.F. seaplanes rescue crew of "Kensington Court."

**September 19.** Soviet troops occupy Vilna. Hitler enters Danzig and broadcasts, a speech defending his policy towards Russia. German attacks on Western Front repulsed.

**September 20.** Fierce fighting west of Warsaw. Comparative calm on Western Front. Canadian Cabinet decide to raise expeditionary force of 20,000. Contraband goods to value of £500,000 reported seized during week ending September 16. Details of private fortunes of Nazi leaders published in New York.

**September 21.** M. Calinescu, Rumanian Premier, assassinated by members of the Iron Guard. President Roosevelt introduces Bill to repeal Arms Embargo. Poles continue to resist in Warsaw, Modlin and other areas, despite ruthless bombing.

**September 22.** Warsaw still holding out. General von Fritsch killed outside the city. French detachments reach outskirts of Zweibruecken. Grimsby trawler reported to have sunk a U-boat by accident.

**September 23.** Polish troops still resisting desperately. Mussolini appeals for cessation of hostilities, now that Poland is "liquidated." Finnish steamers "Martti-Ragnar" and "Walma" sunk by U-boats. British ship "Arkleside" reported sunk.

**September 24.** Incessant bombardment of Warsaw. Swedish ship "Gertrud Blatt" sunk by U-boat. Local German attacks repulsed on Western Front.

**September 25.** Warsaw and Modlin still holding out. French artillery begin first bombardment of Rhine fortifications. Further reconnaissance flights by R.A.F. over Western Germany. Swedish steamer "Silesia" torpedoed. British freighter "Hazleside" reported sunk. Turkish Foreign Minister, M. Sarajoglu, arrives in Moscow.

**September 26.** Attack on Warsaw intensified. Twenty German aircraft attempt to bomb squadron of Home Fleet in North Sea, but are driven off with two 'planes destroyed and one badly damaged. No British ship was damaged. Mr. Churchill reviews success of campaign against U-boats.

**September 27.** Surrender of Warsaw. Poles still hold out on Hel Peninsula. Von Ribbentrop arrives in Moscow to discuss Polish problems. German troops mass on Western Front. Further R.A.F. reconnaissance flights over Germany and Western Front. War Budget introduced in House of Commons. Soviet steamer "Metallist" sunk by unknown submarine.

**September 28.** French troops advance near Saar river. Swedish boat "Nyland" sunk by U-boat. Norwegian steamers "Jern" and "Haugesund" sunk.

**September 29.** Molotov and Ribbentrop sign a treaty in Moscow, by which Poland is partitioned, and a declaration is made that the war should now stop. Estonia and Soviet Union sign a treaty of mutual assistance. R.A.F. carry out attacks on ships of German fleet in Heligoland Bight. Turkish Military Mission, headed by General Orbay, leave Ankara for London. Norwegian steamer "Takstaas" sunk by U-boat.

**September 30.** M. Moscicki resigns Presidency of Poland. New Polish Government constituted in Paris, with M. Raczkiewicz as President, and General Sikorski as Premier and War Minister. Warsaw garrison begins to leave the city. Successful reconnaissance flights over Germany. Five British aircraft engage in air battle with 15 German fighters at height of 20,000 ft. over enemy territory and suffer some casualties. Air Ministry announce photographic survey made by R.A.F. machines 600 ft. above Siegfried Line. Danish steamer "Vendia" sunk by U-boat.

Chapter 18

# MARCH AND COUNTERMARCH: GAMELIN'S MASTERLY TACTICS

*The French Advance into German Territory to Relieve German Pressure upon Poland—Awaiting a Nazi Offensive—Strength of the French Main Line of Defence—The Tempo Quickens—Germans Attack on a Twenty-mile Front—French Troops Withdraw to their old Lines—Important Effect of the French Thrust into Germany—Position after Seven Weeks of War*

At the end of the second week of war the French could claim that their troops had not only fully preserved the integrity of French soil, but had advanced beyond the frontier into Germany some 15½ miles on a front of 12½ miles. Saarlouis and Saarbruecken were both dominated by the French guns, and with the fall of one or the other it would be possible for the invaders to cross the Saar and so overcome the river barrier to the use of their mighty tanks.

As the pressure continued, the German High Command rushed troops and warplanes to the west from Poland, and their arrival was marked by a number of counter-attacks and artillery action on a greater scale than heretofore. Nothing, however, could shake the French hold on the occupied territory, and in the air, too, their 'planes conducted extensive reconnaissances of the enemy positions and, so it was reported, bombed many of the German concentration-points and lines of communication.

While this small-scale warfare was in progress in No-man's-land, the Germans pushed feverishly ahead with the further strengthening of the Siegfried Line. No better evidence of the Line's unreliability could well be imagined than the reports which came in from observers in Luxemburg of the thousands of workmen digging trenches just beyond the frontier, erecting dozens of pill boxes, spreading still more acres of barbed wire. On the banks of the Sauer and Our work never ceased, for at night huge electric lamps illumined the scene of labour.

Even still farther north, from Duisburg, not far from the tip of Luxemburg, to Aachen at the junction of Germany, Holland and Belgium, the work on the Westwall went on without interruption. Here tens of thousands of civilians were employed in excavation work, and the lorries streamed by in endless procession. Opposite the former German territories of Eupen and Malmedy concrete fortifications of immense strength were in course of erection, and miles behind the front infantrymen were seen to be busy on lines and still more lines of trenches.

**Threat to Belgium**

The Germans were obviously expecting offensive operations on a large scale, but it was difficult to believe that they seriously anticipated an onslaught from across Luxemburg or from Belgium, neutral states whose neutrality had been so recently and so categorically confirmed by France and Britain and by Germany herself. There seemed to be more justification for the evacuation of the Rhineland towns and villages which was now in full swing. Saarbruecken had been cleared of its civilians—30,000 in all—in the first days of war, and now there came reports from Switzerland to the effect that Karlsruhe, an important road and rail junction on the Rhine, with a population of 140,000 souls, had been evacuated. Other places similarly affected were Merzig (60,000), Pirmasens (47,000), Zweibruecken (21,000), Saarlouis (10,000), and Bergzabern (3,000), facing Wissembourg across the Lauter.

Not until the war had been in progress for three weeks was the southern half of the Western Front brought into the zone of active conflict. On September 25 the French artillery in the Maginot Line opened a bombardment of the enemy fortifications across the Rhine from the right-angled bend in the frontier at Lauterbourg to near Basle. The Germans, for their part, were active in the Saar region, and the numerous local attacks launched by the Nazi infantry seemed to be feelers sent out to test the strength of the French front. By now, however, the French troops were reported to be so thoroughly organized on enemy soil that the enemy, in spite of the numerous sallies, failed to recover any of the lost ground.

**Active Front Extended**

At the same time the French aircraft enjoyed almost a monopoly of the sky. Reconnaissance and artillery-spotting 'planes flew here and there above the German lines, and occasionally there was a "dog-fight" as German fighters

POILUS RETURN FOR A REST

**Here a party of French troops is seen returning to billets from the front line, having been relieved after pushing well forward into German territory. The men are carrying full equipment, and will no doubt be glad when they reach their journey's end.**

*Photo, Keystone*



went up to engage the audacious enemy. Losses there were on both sides, but it was generally believed that the Allied superiority—Allied, for by now British warplanes were at the front—was still beyond question.

**After Thirty Days**

And now a month of war could be reviewed. On the whole there was marked satisfaction in Paris with the military situation on the West. It was pointed out that the army had, from the very beginning, carried the war into the enemy's country. A cautious advance into the No-man's-land between the Maginot and the Siegfried Lines had cleared a large area of tank traps, machine-gun posts and battery emplacements. Saarbruecken was surrounded on three sides and, industrially, was out of action, with results that could not fail to be serious for the Germans, who relied so largely on the coal of the Saar. Casualties had been kept to a minimum, thanks to Gamelin's cautious leadership, but the Germans had lost a considerable number in futile attacks on the consolidated positions of the French outposts. Up to the present there had been nothing spectacular—no sudden onslaught on a large scale, no prolonged bombardments, no furious battles between the warring navies of the air. It was a very different war from that of 1914; some said it was a very curious war.

Curious—because it was so difficult to foresee the next development on either side. The French, it was generally agreed, would be exceedingly ill-advised to attack: why throw away the lives of thousands of brave men in a frontal assault on a fortified system which, however hurriedly built, must be far stronger than anything which was drowned in blood in the last war? But the Nazis—how long could *they* afford to play a waiting game? Winter was coming. The French army was now fully mobilized against them in lines of immense strength, and every day that went by saw more and more British troops in France coming up to the front to take their place in the battle-line. The blockade was becoming ever more stringent, and ere long, failing help on a vast scale from Russia, would develop into a stranglehold. It seemed certain that a Nazi offensive must come, and come soon. But where?

All down the Western Front runs the believed-to-be impregnable wall of the Maginot Line. An attack on this mighty bastion must surely fail at immense cost to the assailants. The only alternative to a direct onslaught was a move through neutral territory with the object of turning the flank of the French position. In those weeks of practical inactivity anxious eyes were turned to the map, and fingers traced out the directions from which the Nazi hosts might be expected to spring.

Far in the south is the Basle gap, but to reach it the Germans must bring Switzerland into the war, only to find themselves confronted by the great fortress of Belfort and the line of the Vosges. At the other end of the front, Luxemburg, Belgium and Holland fly the flag of neutrality.

An attack through Luxemburg seemed possible, even probable; perhaps the feverish strengthening of the Siegfried defences just beyond the frontier was with a view to making the line at that point a pivot on which the attack would hinge. But Luxemburg is tiny and provides but a small and cramped field for manoeuvre; besides, a few hours would bring the invaders

**THE FRENCH ENTRENCHED IN GERMAN SOIL**

**In the photograph below (a "still" from the British Movietone News), French infantry are seen moving forward through a communication trench in German territory. In the background, on the extreme left, is a memorial to the German dead of the war of 1914–18.**

*Photo, Sport & General*



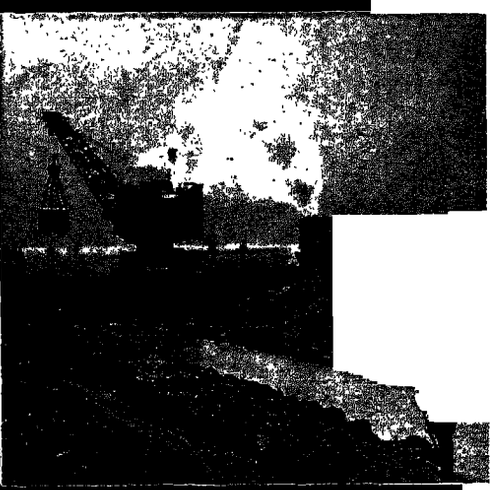


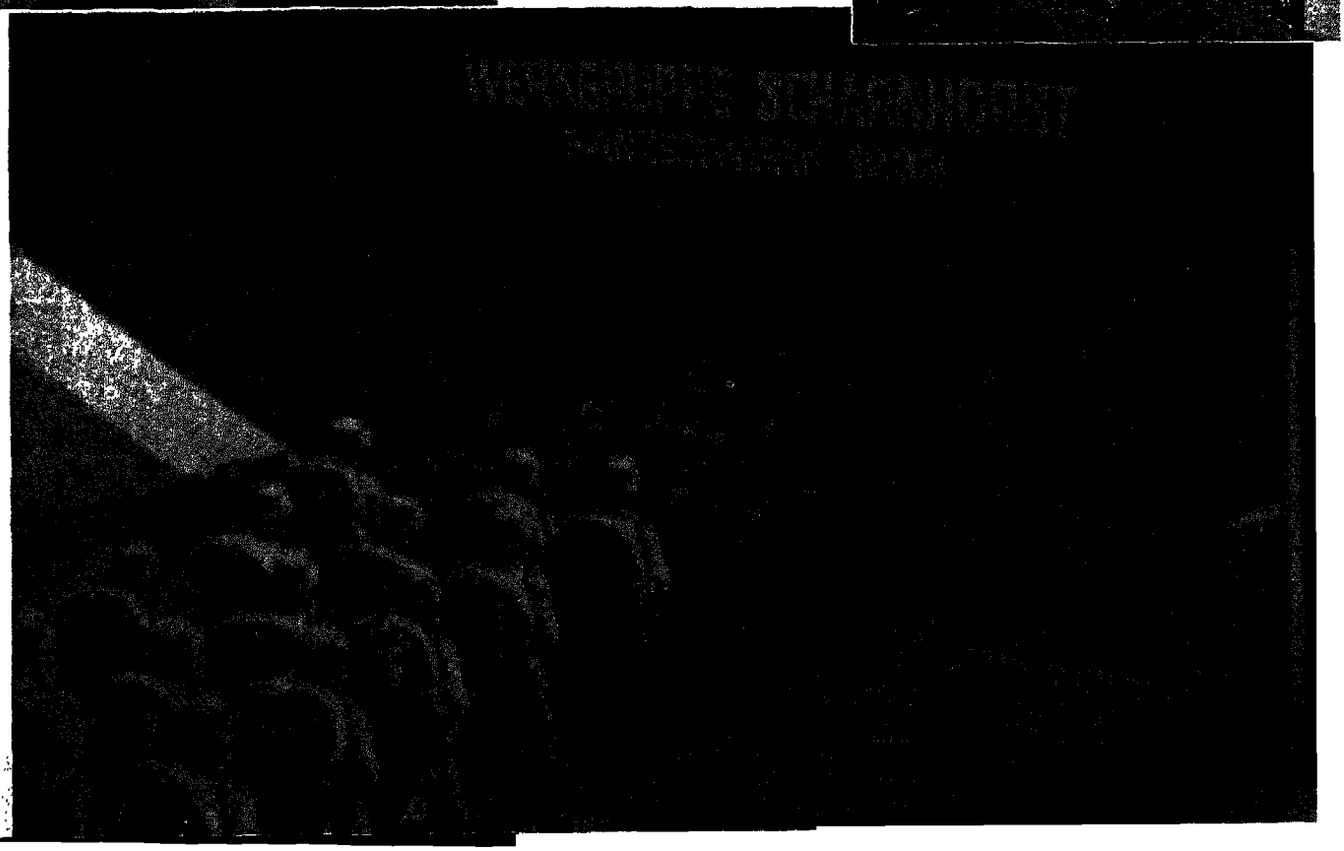


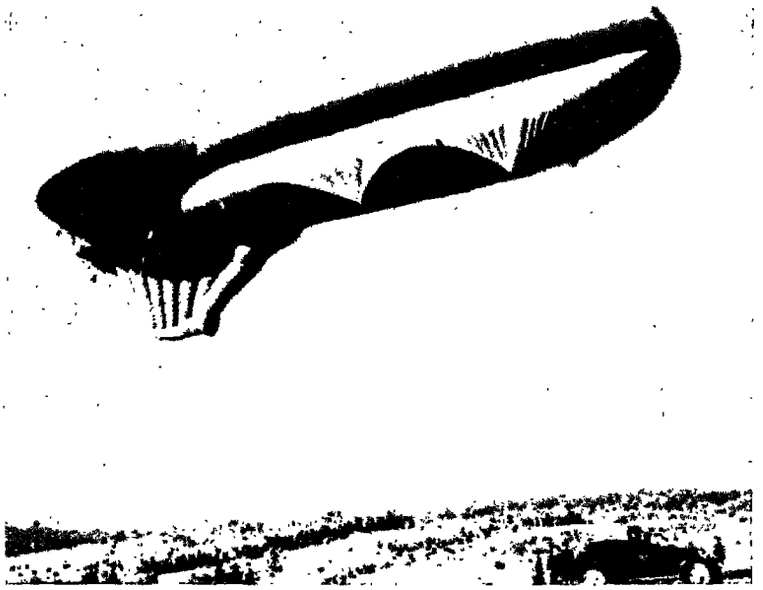
## BEHIND THE SCENES IN THE SIEGFRIED LINE

**Above is seen a camouflaged gun defence post (centre), constructed by the German army on ground overlooking the Luxemburg frontier. On the left, German machine-gunners in a concrete machine-gun nest built in Germany's western fortifications. Right, excavation by mechanical shovels during the construction of Germany's frontier defences. Below, German soldiers entering an armoured work of the Siegfried Line**

*Photos, Associated Press; Dorien Leigh; International Graphic Press*







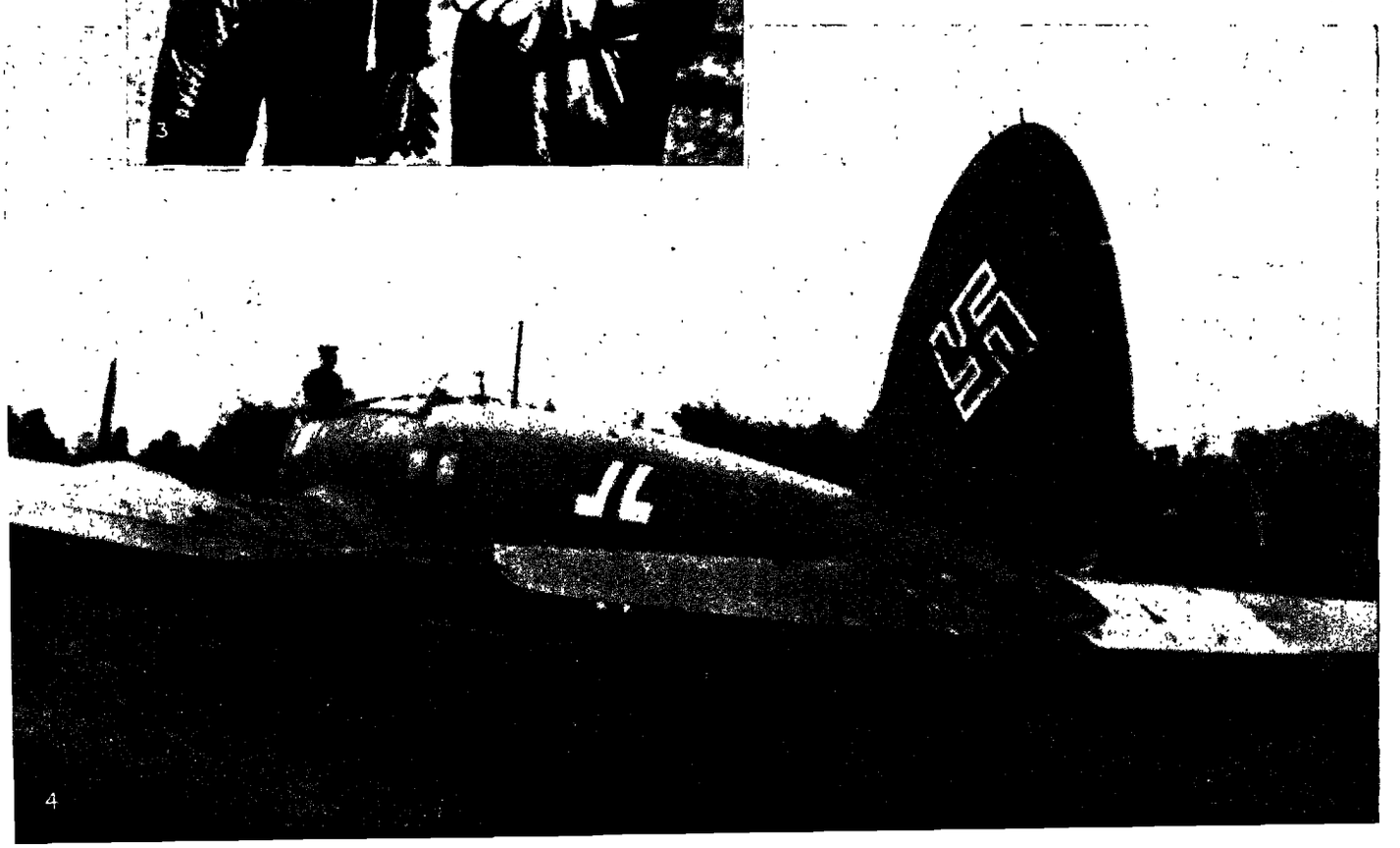




## WAR IN THE AIR ON THE WESTERN FRONT

1. A French anti-aircraft defence balloon going up "somewhere in France." 2. A sergeant of the French Air Force standing beside his Morane, holding the black cross cut out of the Messerschmitt he had brought down. 3. Two French airmen about to set off on a mission. The quick-release mechanism for the parachute can be plainly seen on the chest of the man on the left. 4. A German aeroplane forced down behind the lines in France.

*Photos, courtesy of the French Embassy; Topical; Keystone*





**DAWN RETURN FROM RECONNAISSANCE**

**From the very outbreak of the war Allied 'planes carried out a number of successful reconnaissance flights over the Siegfried Line. The photograph above shows French aircraft returning to one of their secret bases after such a flight during the night.**

*Photo, Keystone*

up against the Maginot Line just within the French border.

Belgium? An attack based on Aachen must almost certainly involve the infringement of Dutch neutrality too, for opposite the great key town is Dutch Limburg, or the "Maastricht Appendix." Well might the Nazi strategists pause when their fingers rested on this section of the map. The forts at Liége—far stronger than in 1914, when they held up the Kaiser's hosts for a few precious days; the system of water defences linked with the Meuse; and then, with the Belgian army threatening one flank, to have to march across the Ardennes, overrun the Maginot defences between Maubeuge and Sedan, and finally meet the British Field Force, fresh, eager, equipped with the finest guns, tanks and 'planes that inventive genius and incomparable workmanship have ever put into the hands of men of daring! Here was a combination of deterrents which might well impress even Hitler, however deep his resolve to show the world what, as Sir Nevile Henderson said, "the corporal of the last war could do as a conquering generalissimo" in this.

**Why Hitler Hesitated**

But as yet Hitler struck neither here nor there. The great offensive tarried, and September passed into October with no new features in the laconic war bulletins. "The night was on the whole quiet. Our advance posts were active." "A quiet night. There have been patrols and ambushes at various points on the front." "Day calm on the whole. Activity was shown by reconnaissance parties of both sides at different points on the front." These are typical of the official communiqués given out in Paris in those days of waiting.

As the month drew on there were indications of increased activity. The French troops were believed to be pressing forward beside the Moselle with a view to reaching the road from Remich in Luxemburg to Saarburg, on the main road to Trier (Treves). Not for a moment were the enemy allowed to realize that they had already attained their quite limited objectives, and were now holding their advanced posts with a skeleton force. German patrols were reported to be "extremely tenacious," and attacks by waves of infantry were mentioned.

The tempo was rising, and anticipation was further heightened by the news brought back by reconnaissance 'planes and through the agents of the French intelligence in Germany that strong concentrations of troops were in progress behind the Westwall. Divisions from the Polish front were identified in the West, more particularly in the region about Trier and behind the Saar valley. Convoys of tanks were spotted from the air, and there was a noticeable increase in the number of aeroplanes. Watchers in the line reported seeing twinkling flashlamps and the striking of matches in the opposite trenches—indications of troops moving up into new positions and checking their whereabouts by hasty glances at the map—glances which in the war of twenty years before would have cost many a man his life as the snipers found a target so conveniently revealed in the gloom of night.

Airmen brought in stories of having seen, six or eight miles behind the main German lines, the headlights of lorries flashed and dimmed and flashed on again as they passed what were probably unlighted vehicles and companies of men on the march. The photographs which they brought back were similarly filled with tell-tale indications of



**SAFE FROM DESECRATION**

**At the beginning of the war all the villages and towns in Alsace lying along the banks of the Rhine were evacuated owing to the danger from German gunfire from across the river. Here a statue of the Virgin is seen being moved from an Alsatian church by the military authorities so that it may be taken to a place of safety.**

*Photo, Keystone*

coming change in the situation. New gun emplacements were clearly visible; fresh trenches had been dug and expanses of wire extended.

The French patrols increased their nocturnal perambulations and brought back many a prisoner. Rushed before the investigating officer, the Nazis could tell but little of what was going on in their lines. Indeed, hardly believable though it be, there were some who did not know that a war was in being!

**Prisoners' Stories**

Simple-minded peasants, they had swallowed without hesitation the story that the explosions they heard to right and left were practice shootings and quarry blastings. They were flabbergasted when they were given a very different tale by their captors. "What?" they said. "Germany at war with France and England, and the Bolsheviks our allies! Impossible!" Like the Fuehrer, they had believed that Poland would be taken with the same ease and by the same bloodless methods as had been so successful in Czecho-Slovakia and Austria. The French officers almost despaired at convincing the prisoners of the truth, and as they passed them back to their headquarters they said to themselves that the Nazis talked like men who had lived for years amongst savages and had just resumed acquaintance with civilization.

He would have to be an innocent indeed, however, who could live through the martial bustle which now enveloped the Nazi lines and still believe that war was far away. The French observers estimated that between 700,000 and 800,000 men were now ranged against them in the Rhineland—a great host packed into the forward trenches, the pill boxes, the casemates by the river, the machine-gun nests, and soon through the whole shell-pocked terrain back to the main defences of the Siegfried Line, where the bulk of the mustered thousands waited not too comfortably—at least, so it was rumoured—for the striking of zero hour.

On October 16 the attack was launched. "This morning," read the French War Communiqué No. 86, issued at 9.30 that night, "on a front of about four miles, the Germans launched an attack, supported by artillery fire, immediately to the east of the Moselle. They occupied the height of the Schneeberg on which we had a light line of observation posts supported by land mines. Caught under our fire, the enemy attack came to a halt, and they even had to withdraw to the north of Apach, into which village they had penetrated for the moment."

Later in the day the attack was renewed. "Towards the end of yesterday afternoon," read the communiqué issued the next morning, "the Germans launched a second attack, supported by heavy artillery fire, in the region east of the Saar over a front of about twenty miles. Our light advance troops fell back fighting in accordance with their instructions, but our fire held up the enemy on the prearranged line."

Then the communiqué proceeded to give an account of recent operations which must have come as a surprise to some of the amateur strategists. "In anticipation of this resumption of the offensive by the Germans, the French Command a fortnight ago decided to withdraw to other positions the French divisions which had taken the offensive on German territory indirectly to assist the Polish armies. The whole of the necessary movements were completed by October 3. Thereafter we had in contact with the enemy only light advance troops and a few supporting units."

**Planned Withdrawal**

This comparatively informative bulletin may be supplemented by that issued by the German High Command on the same day: "French troops yesterday evacuated the greater part of the German territory occupied by them in front of our fortifications. They retreated to and over the frontier."

Five or six German divisions were engaged in the major attack, in the afternoon of October 16. The huge reserves massed in readiness were not needed, for the Germans did not attempt anything more than the occupation of the land from which the French had withdrawn nearly a fortnight before. As soon as they made contact with the French main line of defence the attack petered away; there was no attempt at carrying a really formidable obstacle.

At the same time their advance was no easy matter, unattended by loss. When they retired the French left behind them a quantity of mines of various descriptions, and in addition the terrain was held by numerous machine-gun posts who took heavy toll of the attackers before they themselves retired in good order. Then the guns in the rear, even as far back as the main defences of the Maginot Line, were brought into action and, assured of the range, subjected the ground over which the attack was being made to a

devastating fire. There were reports that the enemy used tanks in support of his infantry—some said that twenty Nazi tanks were among the casualties; in man-power the Germans were supposed to have lost between five hundred and a thousand, possibly many more.

In the light of what happened it was difficult to believe that the attack had been intended to be anything more than a preliminary excursion, or possibly it had the limited objective of forcing the French to abandon the German territory which they had occupied since the war opened. In support of this view may be quoted the " review " of operations on the Western Front issued by the German High Command on October 19. This opened with the claim that the French troops that still remained in German territory between the river Saar and the Hornbach-Bitche road had been driven back over the frontier after some hard fighting. Then it went on to give a highly-coloured version of the fighting since the outbreak of hostilities. On September 9, it said, the French sent reconnaissance troops across the frontier between Luxemburg and the Rhine west of Karlsruhe. " Since then no serious fighting has taken place anywhere on the Western Front. There has been purely local fighting on the terrain between the frontier and our Westwall. Except on one occasion both sides have conducted hostilities with only small forces, mostly under the strength of one company."

In September, went on the review, the French occupied a few German districts —near the French frontier between Luxemburg and Saarlautern, the salient south-west of Saarbruecken known as the Warndt Forest, and the salient south-east of Saarbruecken lying between the Saar and the Felserald. " Only in the two last-named districts, which we evacuated according to plan, did the enemy advance to a depth of from 3 to 5 kilometres, and with heavy losses. The rest of the territory in front of the Westwall was not occupied by the enemy." Nowhere did the French forces approach near to the Westwall except at Saarbruecken, where the line is almost on the frontier. " The enemy has now given up the territory, the occupation of which was claimed as a success and of tactical assistance to the Poles, and has now retired beyond the frontier energetically followed by our troops."

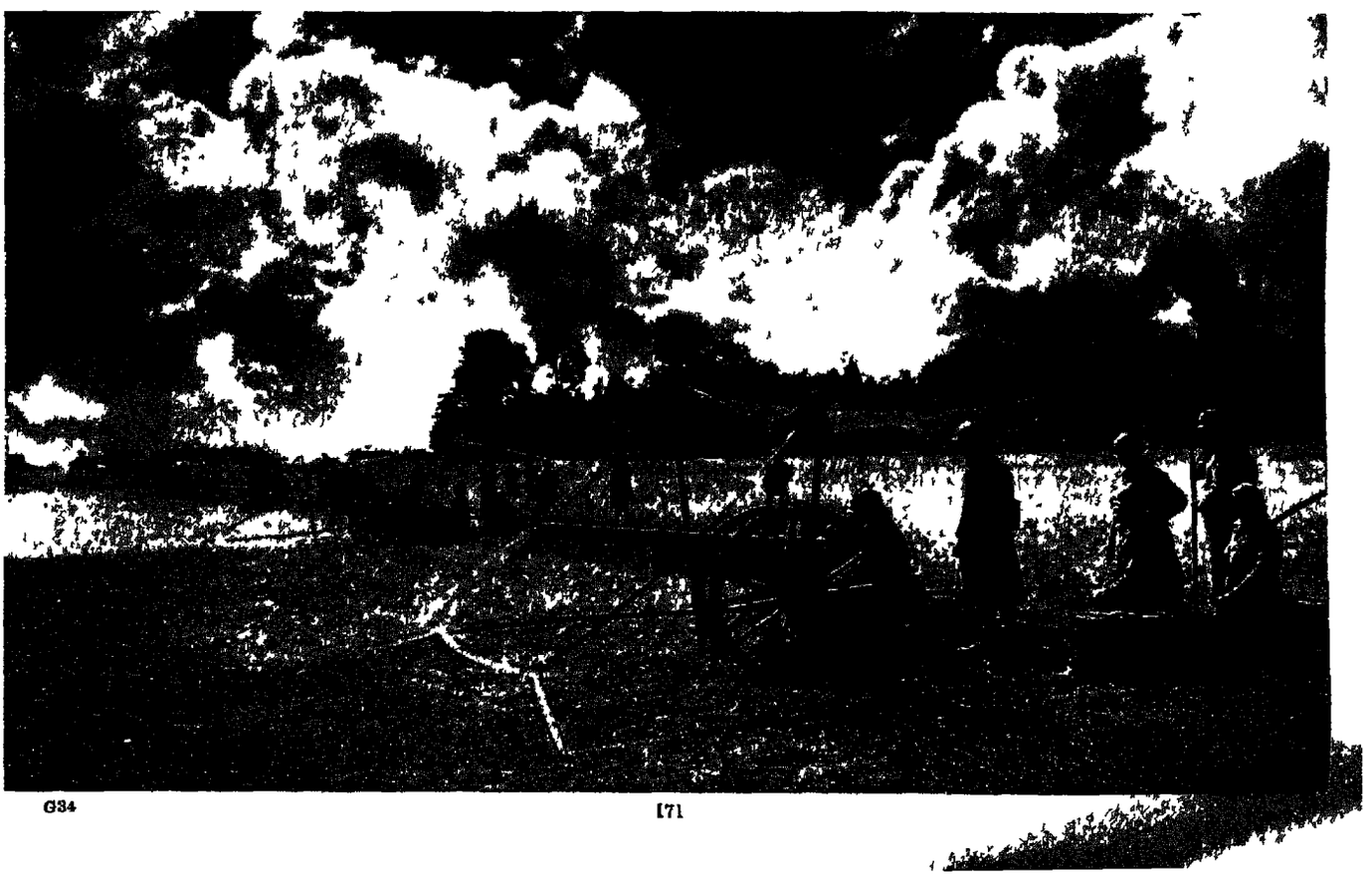
Much of the foregoing was obviously intended for home consumption, and



**WAITING FOR THE NAZIS**

**Two glimpses of the French army in action on the Western Front. Right, a sentinel keeps watch over the valley Below is seen a battery of the famous French 75's ready for action, each gun covered with netting for camouflage.**

*Photos, Keystone, Wide World*





WEAPONS OF WAR IN A PEACEFUL SETTING

**The tiny French tanks known as "chenillettes," used largely for the transport of supplies, look strangely out of place in the peaceful German orchard where they found themselves soon after the war had begun. An idea of their size is given by comparison with the horses in the background.**

*Photo, Keystone*

so, too, were the exceedingly comforting tidings concerning the Nazi air force which followed. "Air operations on the Western Front have been up to now mainly for reconnaissance purposes. There have been no bomb attacks. German anti-aircraft has cost the enemy 60 'planes." (Compare this with the French statement: "Between September 3 and October 20 France lost eight chaser 'planes as against 24 German machines brought down.")

**Casualties in Two Months**

The total German losses on the Western Front up to October 17, continued the review, were 169 dead, 356 wounded, and 114 missing. On the Rhine front from Karlsruhe to Basle, where "absolute quiet had reigned since the beginning of the war," only one German had been killed—and he by "falling shrapnel from our own anti-aircraft fire"!

Although there are discrepancies in the rival accounts there is a measure of agreement on the main essentials. Never were great armies actively engaged in the operations; masses of men were present, it is true, but in effect they were in garrison, spectators of a struggle on quite a small scale, one between outposts and patrols, machine-gun nests and to some extent tanks, while the big guns bombarded the terrain at their leisure. Such fighting as there was took place entirely in the No-man's-land—three to thirteen miles wide—that separates the great fortified systems of the Maginot Line and its German counterpart, the Westwall or Siegfried Line. To the extent that it nailed a large number of German divisions to the Western Front while the Polish campaign was in progress, the French advance may be held to have been justified, and beyond a doubt the invaders obtained much valuable information concerning the quality and extent of the Siegfried defences. The advance troops and patrols acted as "feelers," who groped their way over the mine-strewn and fire-swept ground up to the very face of the main fortifications. Then, having attained their objectives, the Polish campaign being ended, they carefully and unobtrusively retired to their old lines, roughly on the frontier some way in advance of the Maginot Line.

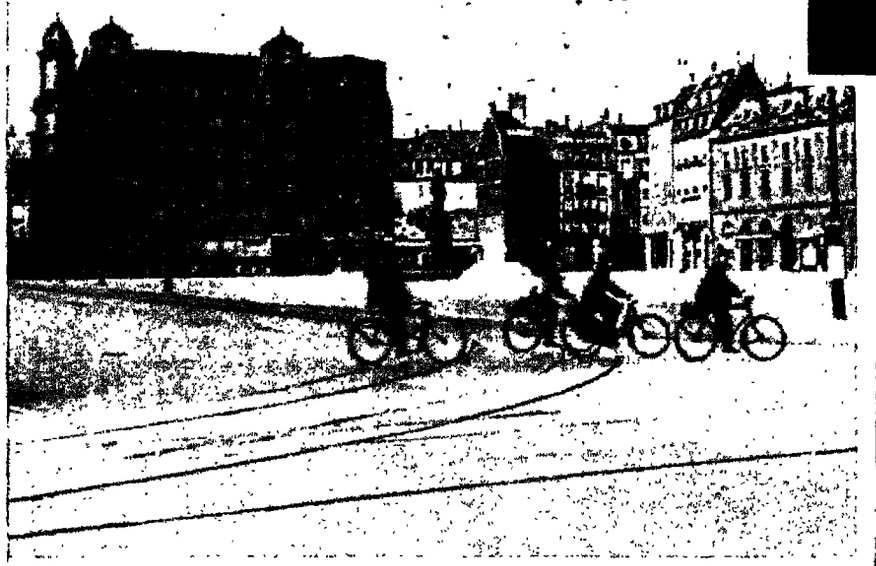
Thus at the end of the first seven weeks of war the two opposing forces occupied practically the same positions as had been theirs at the commencement of hostilities. There had been a retreat—"according to plan," said the Germans—followed by a withdrawal to the old lines, again "according to plan," as the French declared.

The position was well summed up by the military commentator of the Paris newspaper, "Le Temps," when he described it as a "kind of half-truce," during which civilian life and railway and road traffic had been permitted to proceed almost normally on both sides of the frontier. "The French positions," he pointed out, "are now practically where they were at the opening of hostilities," while as for the Germans, nowhere had they crossed the French frontier. "As our High Command intends to remain on the defensive during the present phase the result is almost complete inaction."

The word "inaction" may convey a misleading impression, however. If there had been no great battle on the scale of the Marne or the Somme, exacting its toll of hundreds of thousands of lives and leaving a trail of destruction over a broad sweep of countryside, the Germans had been compelled to keep a huge force permanently opposed to the French. After the event it was revealed that the French had no intention of attacking the Siegfried Line in force, but the German High Command might well be excused for believing the contrary. They watched the French troops cross the frontier and make good their hold on German soil in spite of all that could be done to dislodge them; they found themselves obliged to order the







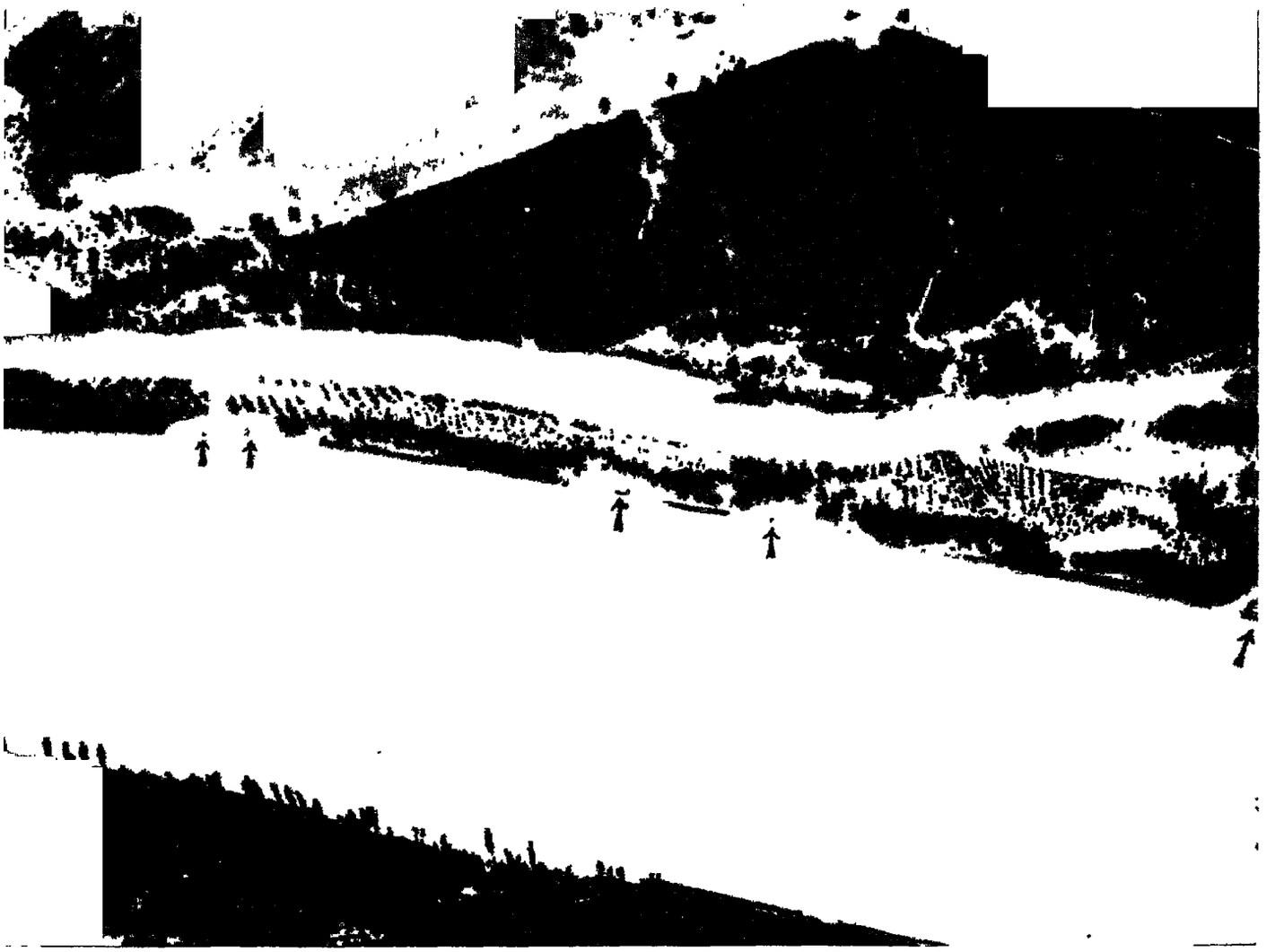
## STRASBOURG EMPTIED OF LIFE

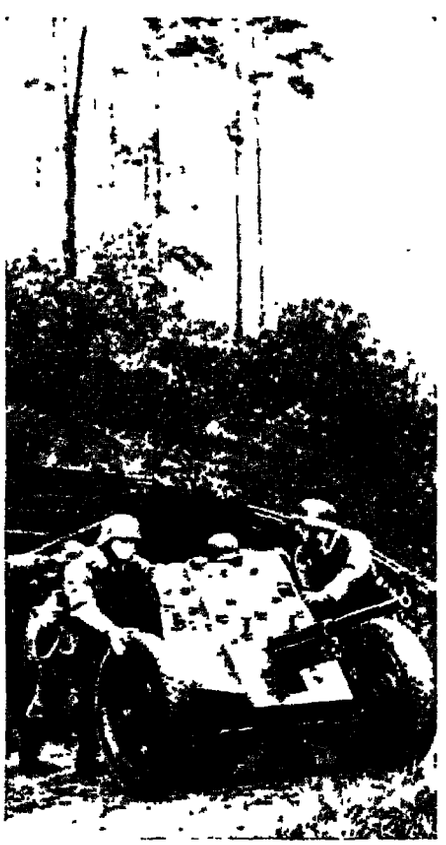
The entire population of Strasbourg (220,000 persons) was evacuated early in September. Here are some scenes from the silent city: 1. The Cathedral being protected with boarding and sandbags. 2. A French sentry on guard over a bridge. 3. The Place Kléber, deserted save for a party of Gardes Mobiles. 4. A station occupied by French troops. 5. French soldier looking down the Kehl bridge towards the German bank of the Rhine.

*Photos, courtesy of the French Embassy. Sport & General; Central Press*









**FLOODED OUTPOSTS OF THE SIEGFRIED LINE**

**The photograph above, taken from an Allied reconnaissance 'plane, indicates how some of the advanced posts of the Siegfried Line, constructed on the banks of a river, were flooded after heavy rains. The arrows show where the rising river penetrated between the fortifications. Below, a German anti-tank gun is being moved out from its place of concealment in the Rhine fortifications.**

*Photos, Keystone; Fox*

evacuation of many of the Saarland towns and even places far behind the line, and the Gestapo had to combat the disillusion and downright disaffection which this move must have engendered. Only for a very brief period did the French cross the German frontier in 1914, but in 1939 their invasion was pressed home with relentless efficiency. Even when the advance was followed by a withdrawal, much of the latter's encouraging effect on the German morale was lost when it became understood that the retirement was entirely voluntary.

Furthermore, the threat inherent in the French advance must have seriously deranged the German plans for an offensive on a grand scale. Day after day the German armies were kept on the move, marching here and marching there, exhausting their precious stores. Until they knew if and where the French onslaught was about to fall, they could hardly implement their own plans. And when the French had completed their manoeuvre — when they had knocked at the door of the Siegfried Line and then slipped away while the awakened giant grappled wildly in the air with his elusive assailant—winter gave indubitable signs of its approach.

First the rains descended and the floods came; the Rhine rose three feet in a day or two. Then a bitter cold, and snow whitened the upper slopes of the Saarland heights and those of the Vosges and the Black Forest across the river. Time and again the offensive was believed to be imminent. It was to be launched opposite Karlsruhe; then through Luxemburg, beside the Moselle. Again the scene was to be somewhere in Belgium—or it might be farther north still, in the Netherlands. Along five hundred miles of front the Allies and the neutral countries watched the hurry and scurry behind the Siegfried Line.

So far as France and Britain were concerned there was no hurry: *they* could wait while the blockade and the increasing privations and discontent on the German home front did their work. Only the Reich need look anxiously at the calendar.

# *Historic Documents. XXX and XXXI*

## *GERMANY AND RUSSIA DIVIDE THE SPOIL*

On September 28, 1939, Molotov and von Ribbentrop signed, on behalf of their respective Governments, the "Germano-Soviet Treaty of Amity and of the Frontier between the U.S.S.R. and Germany." The articles of this document are set out below, followed by an accompanying Declaration and Molotov's letter on proposed economic agreements.

FOLLOWING the dissolution of the former Polish State, the Government of the U.S.S.R. and the German Government regard it as their exclusive task to restore peace and order in that territory and to secure for the peoples residing there a peaceful existence in conformity with their national characteristics.

With this aim in view they arrived at agreement on the following:

*Article* 1. The Government of the U.S.S.R. and the German Government establish as the frontier between the interests of their respective States, on the territory of the former Polish State, the line which is drawn on the appended map, which will be described in more detail in a supplementary protocol.

*Article* 2. Both parties recognize the frontier between the interests of their respective States established in Article 1 as final and will eliminate any interference by Third Powers with this decision.

*Article* 3. The necessary state reorganization of the territory west of the line indicated in Article 1 shall be effected by the German Government, and of the territory east of this line by the Government of the U.S.S.R.

*Article* 4. The Government of the U.S.S.R. and the German Government regard the reorganization mentioned above as a reliable foundation for the further development of friendly relations between their peoples.

*Article* 5. This treaty is subject to ratification. The exchange of ratification instruments shall be effected in Berlin as early as possible. The treaty comes into force as soon as it is signed.

THE DECLARATION OF THE SOVIET AND GERMAN GOVERNMENTS OF SEPTEMBER 28, 1939:

THE German Government and the Government of the U.S.S.R., by the treaty signed today, having finally settled questions that arose as a result of the dissolution of the Polish State, and having thereby created a firm foundation for a lasting peace in Eastern Europe, in mutual agreement express the opinion that the liquidation of the present war between Germany on the one hand and Great Britain on the other is in the interests of all nations.

Therefore both Governments will direct their common efforts, if necessary in accord with other friendly Powers, to attain this aim as early as possible.

If, however, these efforts of both Governments remain futile, it will be established thereby that Great Britain and France bear the responsibility for the continuation of war, and in the event of the continuation of the war the Governments of Germany and the U.S.S.R. will consult each other on the necessary measures.

LETTER FROM MOLOTOV TO VON RIBBENTROP, SEPTEMBER 28:

HERR Reichminister, referring to our conversations we have the honour to confirm to you that, on the basis and in the spirit of the general political agreement reached by us, the Government of the U.S.S.R. is filled with the desire to do everything to develop economic relations and the trade turnover between the U.S.S.R. and Germany.

With this aim in view, both parties will draw up an economic programme in accordance with which the Soviet Union will supply Germany with raw materials, which Germany will, in her turn, compensate by deliveries of industrial goods to be effected in the course of a lengthy period.

Both countries will draft this economic programme in such a way that the volume of the German-Soviet trade turnover should again reach the highest level attained in the past.

Both Governments will immediately issue the necessary instructions for the realization of the above measures and will see to it that negotiations should be begun and brought to a conclusion as soon as possible.

(Signed) MOLOTOV

IN answer to this letter Molotov received on September 28 a letter from von Ribbentrop, stating that the German Government agreed to issue all necessary instructions in the spirit of Molotov's letter.

## *BRITAIN'S REPLY TO THE DICTATORS' CHALLENGE*

To Hitler's surprise and annoyance, Britain flinched neither before the shock of the Treaty of Amity with Russia nor at the threat contained in the Declaration. We reproduce part of Mr. Chamberlain's speech in the House of Commons on October 3, 1939, in which he comments upon the situation that had arisen.

THE agreement between Germany and Russia and the subsequent partition of Poland between them has, of course, changed the position in Poland, but it by no means follows that the arrangement will endure to the ultimate advantage of Germany and still less should it affect the aims of his Majesty's Government. There is nothing in that agreement that should cause us to do anything other than what we are doing now—mobilizing all the resources and all the might of the British Empire for the effective prosecution of the war.

The reason for which this country entered the war has been frequently proclaimed. It was to put an end to the successive acts of German aggression which menaced the freedom and the very security of all the nations of Europe.

The immediate cause of the war was the deliberate invasion of Poland by Germany, the latest but by no means the only act of aggression planned and carried through by the German Government. But if Poland was the direct occasion of war, it was not the fundamental cause. That cause was the overwhelming sense in this country and in France of the intolerable nature of a state of affairs in which the nations of Europe were faced with the alternative of jeopardizing their freedom or of mobilizing their forces at regular intervals to defend it.

The passage in the Russo-German declaration about the liquidation of the war is obscure, but it seems to combine a suggestion of some proposal for peace with a scarcely veiled threat as to the consequences if the proposal should be refused. I cannot anticipate what the nature of any such proposal might be. But I can say at once that no threat would ever induce this country or France to abandon the purpose for which we have entered upon this struggle.

To attempt—as German propaganda does—to saddle us with the responsibility for continuing the war because we are not prepared to abandon the struggle before this purpose is achieved is only another instance of war technique. The responsibility for the war rests upon those who have conceived and carried out this policy of successive aggression, and it can neither be evaded or excused.

AND I would add one thing more. No mere assurances from the present German Government could be accepted by us. For that Government have too often proved in the past that their undertakings are worthless when it suits them that they should be broken. If, therefore, proposals are made, we shall certainly examine them and we shall test them in the light of what I have just said. Nobody desires the war to continue for an unnecessary day, but the overwhelming mass of opinion in this country, and I am satisfied also in France, is determined to secure that the rule of violence shall cease and that the word of Governments, once pledged, must henceforth be kept.

# *RUSSIA FORCES TERMS ON THREE BALTIC STATES*

In September, 1939, the Soviet Government started a series of "invitations" to small countries bordering the Baltic to enter into what were termed "Treaties of Mutual Assistance." Powerless to resist, envoys of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania repaired in turn to Moscow to sign their names to pacts the terms of which are given below.

TEXT OF THE SOVIET-ESTONIAN TREATY OF MUTUAL ASSISTANCE, SIGNED SEPTEMBER 28, 1939:

ARTICLE 1. The two contracting parties undertake to render to each other every assistance, including military, in the event of direct aggression or the menace of aggression arising on the part of any great European Power against the sea frontiers of the contracting parties in the Baltic Sea, or their land frontiers across the territory of the Latvian Republic, as well as against bases indicated in Article 3.

*Article* 2. The Soviet Union undertakes to render to the Estonian Army assistance in armaments and other military equipment on favourable terms.

*Article* 3. The Estonian Republic assures the Soviet Union of the right to maintain naval bases and several aerodromes for aviation on lease terms at reasonable prices on the Estonian islands of Oesel and Dago, and in the town of Paldiski (Baltiski port).

The exact sites for the bases and aerodromes shall be allotted and their boundaries defined by mutual agreement.

For the protection of the naval bases and aerodromes, the Soviet Union has the right to maintain at its own expense on the sites allotted for the bases and aerodromes, Soviet land and air armed forces of a strictly limited strength, their maximum numbers to be determined by special agreements.

*Article* 4. The two contracting parties undertake not to conclude any alliances nor participate in any coalitions directed against one of the contracting parties.

*Article* 5. The realization of this Pact should not affect in any extent the sovereign rights of the contracting parties, in particular their economic systems and State organization.

The sites allotted for bases and aerodromes (Article 3) shall remain the territory of the Estonian Republic.

*Article* 6. This Pact comes into force upon the exchange of the instruments of ratification. The exchange of these instruments shall take place in Tallinn within six days from the date of the signature of this Pact.

The term of the validity of this Pact is ten years, and if one of the contracting parties does not find it necessary to denounce this Pact one year before the expiration of its terms, the Pact shall automatically continue valid for the next five years.

THE trade agreement concluded between Russia and Estonia provides for an increase of four and a half times in the trade turnover between the two countries.

Russia grants Estonia the right to transit goods along the railways and waterways of Russia to Murmansk, Soroka, and to the ports of the Black Sea. The trade agreement also provides for a great extension of the transit of Soviet goods via Estonian ports.

TEXT OF THE SOVIET-LATVIAN TREATY OF MUTUAL ASSISTANCE, SIGNED OCTOBER 5, 1939:

ARTICLE 1. Both sides pledge themselves to universal, including military, assistance in case of a direct attack or threat of attack by any other European Power. This covers the sea borders of the Baltic Sea as well as the land frontiers adjoining the territory of Estonia or Lithuania.

*Article* 2. The Soviet Union promises to help the Latvian Army by supplying it with arms and war materials on advantageous conditions.

*Article* 3. Latvia grants the right to the Soviet Union to establish naval bases for the Russian Navy in the ports of Liepaja (Libau) and Ventspils (Windau), and to build several aerodromes for the Soviet Air Force according to special arrangements. Further, the Soviet Union is entitled, for the defence of the Gulf of Riga, to set up artillery bases along the coast between Ventspils and Pitrags (Petragge). At the naval bases and aerodromes the Soviet Union may maintain a certain number of troops, whose strength will be fixed in a separate agreement.

*Article* 4. Both partners undertake not to enter into any alliances or system of alliances directed against the other. Nothing in the Pact is to be allowed to impair the sovereign rights of the parties nor affect their internal regime, their economic and social system, or their other military measures. The naval bases or aerodromes granted to the Soviet Union remain the territory of the Latvian State.

*Article* 5. The Pact will come into force with the exchange of the ratification Notes, which should take place within the next six days in Riga. The validity of the Pact is ten years.

TEXT OF THE SOVIET-LITHUANIAN TREATY OF MUTUAL ASSISTANCE, SIGNED OCTOBER 10, 1939:

ARTICLE 1. For the purpose of the consolidation of the friendly relations between the U.S.S.R. and Lithuania, the city of Vilna and the Vilna district are transferred by the Soviet Union to the Lithuanian Republic and included in the territory of the Lithuanian State, the boundary between the U.S.S.R. and the Lithuanian Republic being established in accordance with the map appended hereto. This boundary shall be specified in more detail in a supplementary protocol.

*Article* 2. The Soviet Union and the Lithuanian Republic undertake to render each other every assistance, including military assistance, in the event of aggression or the menace of aggression against Lithuania as well as in the event of aggression or the menace of aggression against the Soviet Union over Lithuanian territory on the part of any European Power.

*Article* 3. The Soviet Union undertakes to render the Lithuanian Army assistance in armaments and other military equipment on favourable terms.

*Article* 4. The Soviet Union and the Lithuanian Republic undertake jointly to effect the protection of the State boundaries of Lithuania. For this purpose the Soviet Union is granted the right to maintain at its own expense, at points in the Lithuanian Republic established by mutual agreement, Soviet land and air armed forces of strictly limited strength. The exact locations of these troops and the boundaries within which they may be quartered, their strength at each particular point, and all other questions, economic and administrative, and questions of jurisdiction arising in connexion with the presence of Soviet armed forces on Lithuanian territory under the present treaty, shall be regulated by special agreements. Sites and buildings necessary for this purpose shall be allotted by the Lithuanian Government on lease terms at a reasonable price.

*Article* 5. In the event of the menace of aggression against Lithuania or against the U.S.S.R. over Lithuanian territory, the two contracting parties shall immediately discuss the resulting situation and take all measures found necessary by mutual agreement to secure the inviolability of the territories of the contracting parties.

*Article* 6. The two contracting parties undertake not to conclude any alliances nor to take part in any coalitions directed against either of the contracting parties.

*Article* 7. The realization of this treaty should not affect in any way the sovereign rights of the contracting parties, in particular their State organization, economic and social system, military measures, and generally the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs. The places of location of the Soviet land and air armed forces (Article 4 of this Treaty) in all circumstances remain a component part of the territory of the Lithuanian Republic.

*Article* 8. The term of the validity of this treaty in regard to the undertakings for mutual assistance between the U.S.S.R. and the Lithuanian Republic (Articles 2–7) is fifteen years, and, unless one of the contracting parties finds it necessary to denounce the provisions of this treaty for a specified term of one year before the expiration of that term, these provisions shall automatically continue valid for the next ten years.

*Article* 9. This treaty comes into force upon the exchange of instruments of ratification. The exchange of these instruments shall take place in Kaunas within six days from the day of signature of this treaty.

Chapter 19

# THE RUSSO-GERMAN PACT AND DOMINATION OF THE BALTIC

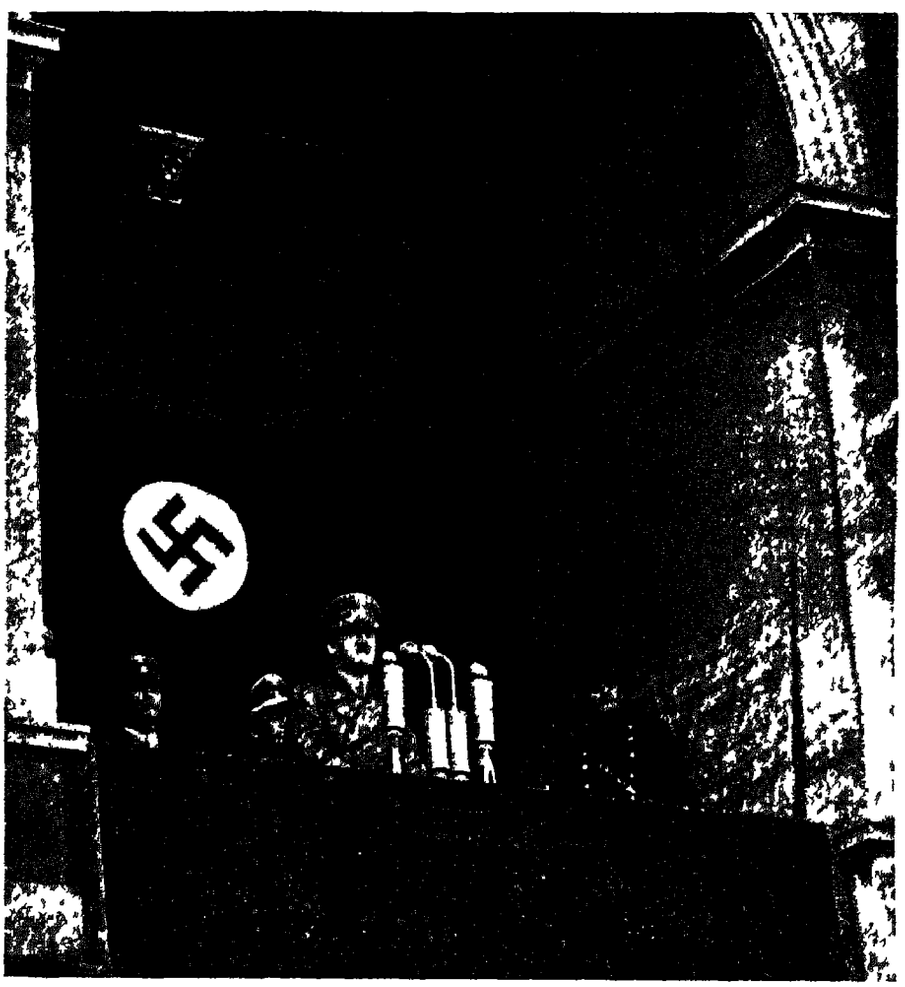
*Soviet Proposes an Anti-Aggression Conference, and later Suggests a Triple Defensive Alliance —Inconclusive Conversations—Fall of Litvinov—Molotov and a New Orientation of Soviet Foreign Policy—British Military Mission to Moscow—Proposed Guarantee to Baltic States—Russo-German Non-Aggression Pact—Chamberlain's Firm Words to Hitler—Russia Invades Poland—Her Pacts with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—Her 'Treaty of Amity' with Germany*

THROUGHOUT the tense months which preceded the outbreak of the Second Great War, one burning question was on the lips of everybody in every country of the world —"What would be the attitude of Soviet Russia to further aggression by Germany?" If Russia's immense resources in man power and materials could be enlisted in the Anti-Aggression Front formed by Britain and France, or at least her friendly neutrality assured, even Herr Hitler, it was thought, would hesitate before plunging his country into such a hopeless combat. But in well-informed quarters there was a noticeable uneasiness and hesitation regarding Russia's probable attitude. The history of Russian collaboration in League of Nations affairs had not been a happy one and had tended to divide the nations of Europe into two camps—those who discounted the danger of Communism and were anxious to secure the entry of Russia into the concert of peace-loving Powers; and those who considered Bolshevism a negation of all they held dear, and who wanted nothing to do with the arch-exponent of this doctrine.

Russia's suspicion of the aims of the Democracies had not been lessened by the exclusion of her representative from the Munich Conference which settled the fate of Czecho-Slovakia. Even in those countries bordering on Soviet Russia, however, which might be claimed to know the mind of the Kremlin best, doubt was expressed whether, without previous consultation with Britain and France, Russia would have marched to honour her alliance with Czecho-Slovakia if Hitler had invaded that country.

Prominent in the minds of the directors of Soviet foreign policy was the suspicion that Britain and France desired to bargain with Hitler at her expense, and the Munich agreement and various ill-considered utterances by leading unofficial personalities in Britain and France had strengthened this view. The Kremlin noted that, although the aims of the Democracies were to fight aggression, not the slightest help had been tendered Russia in her fight against Japanese expansion in Mongolia—a war which had involved the use of forces on a large scale. It was during this atmosphere of mutual suspicion that Hitler's invasion of Czecho-Slovakia precipitated the European crisis. The Soviet Government, apparently still bitterly anti-Nazi in sentiment, almost immediately proposed a conference between Britain, France, Russia, Rumania and Turkey to devise means of resistance to further aggression.

Britain considered the proposal "premature," and made the counter-suggestion that Russia should join in a declaration with Great Britain, France and Poland against aggression, envisaging immediate consultation between the four Powers in the case of aggression. The Kremlin thought this a not very satisfactory alternative, but agreed to it on condition that a formal declaration be made against aggression by the Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers of all four States. But the proposal was rendered abortive by the strong objections of the Polish Government, which refused to sign any document side by side with the U.S.S.R. Meanwhile,



HITLER SPEAKS AT MEMEL

The Fuehrer is here seen addressing the huge crowd shown in the photograph in page 182, in the Theatre Square of Memel, on the occasion of the incorporation of Memel territory into the German Reich on March 23, 1939. The population of the territory is about 150,000.

*Photo, Wide World*

Russia watched with growing apprehension the extension of Germany's influence. With Czecho-Slovakia now thoroughly under her heel, Germany turned her attention to the Baltic and seized Memel from Lithuania; the German Press began a bitter campaign of invective and false allegations against Poland, similar to the propaganda which had preceded the capitulation of Czecho-Slovakia in September, 1938.

The march of lawlessness would brook no delay. Emulating his Axis partner, Mussolini had seized Albania. As an earnest of her intentions, Britain gave guarantees to Poland, Rumania and Greece in March and April, 1939. An endeavour was made to get Russia to furnish her contribution to peace with a unilateral guarantee of Poland and Rumania. Russia, however, was apparently still fearful that any guarantee she might give unilaterally would leave her to fight Germany alone in the event of German aggression against Poland or Rumania, and she insisted on a triple defensive alliance between Britain, France and Russia, to be supplemented by a military convention and a guarantee of all the border states from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

The Russian proposal was made on April 17, 1939. Nearly a month elapsed before Britain replied, and, in the meantime, an ominous turn was given to Russian foreign policy by the resignation of M. Maxim Litvinov, the Soviet Foreign Commissar, and his replacement by Viacheslav Molotov. Litvinov had been closely identified with the Soviet policy of collaboration with the League of Nations and Britain and France against aggression. His successor was comparatively unknown. Did Russia intend to continue her policy of proffered collaboration with Great Britain and France, or did she intend withdrawing into isolation, or perhaps even coming to agreement with Herr Hitler? That the latter possibility could not be excluded was hinted at in a statement by M. Molotov on May 31, when, for the first time in the Russo-British diplomatic exchanges, he spoke of the possibility of Russia resuming trade negotiations with Germany.

Germany's Press campaign on the Danzig and Corridor questions was now gaining momentum. The urgency of completing the Peace Front begun by Britain and France became ever more necessary. In the middle of June the British Foreign Office sent to Moscow an expert, in the person of Mr. W. Strang, to deal in detail with the Soviet proposals for a triple defensive alliance. Although, as the discussions dragged on, they seemed unnecessarily lengthy,



**AFTER LITVINOV—MOLOTOV**

**M. Maxim Litvinov (above) resigned his post as Soviet Foreign Commissar on May 3, 1939, having held that position since 1930. He was succeeded by M. Viacheslav Molotov (below), who combined the post with that of Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, which he already held.**

*Photos, Wide World; Planet News*



a favourable outcome was regarded by most people as a foregone conclusion; this impression was heightened by the Russian Government's suggestion on July 23 that immediate staff talks between Great Britain, France and Russia should be initiated.

A number of British and French military, naval and air experts arrived in Moscow just over a fortnight later. But within a few days of their arrival it became apparent that serious difficulties had arisen. Russia was pressing, *inter alia*, for an Anglo-Soviet guarantee of her Baltic border States of Finland, Estonia and Latvia. These States had been a part of the Tsar's dominions. Two of them had large German minorities, while the third, Finland, had extensive cultural and commercial contacts with Germany. Russia professed that the possibility of Germany using these States as a starting point for aggression against her own territory could not be excluded. Britain, however, was not disposed to give a guarantee to these States against their will, and was, moreover, concerned with the difficulty of implementing such a guarantee in the event of war between Britain and Germany, when the Baltic might be closed to British surface vessels.

Russia also insisted that, in order to implement the guarantee to Poland which it was proposed she should give, it was necessary for Russian troops to pass over Polish territory; but this the Poles refused to allow, fearing the ideological and territorial consequences of a Russian march into their territory. While the Anglo-French-Russian talks were at a virtual standstill, and before the Anglo-French military missions had left Moscow, the whole world was startled by the announcement of the conclusion of a Commercial Agreement and a Non-Aggression Pact between Russia and Germany.

At midnight on Monday, August 21, the following announcement was issued by the Official German Agency in Berlin:

**"Germany and Soviet Russia have agreed to conclude a Non-Aggression Pact. Herr von Ribbentrop, the German Foreign Minister, will travel to Moscow on Wednesday to complete negotiations for the Pact."**

Confirmation of the arrangement came a few hours later from Moscow. On August 23 Herr von Ribbentrop, with a staff of some 30 experts, entered a 'plane and flew to Moscow. The world did not have to wait long for the accomplishment of the Pact. In contrast to the tediousness of the Anglo-French negotiations with Russia, the full terms of the Russo-German Pact were announced the same day. The text of the Agreement is printed in page 18; its chief provisions were:

(a) Both Powers bound themselves to refrain from aggressive action against each other;

(b) Both Powers to abstain from participation in any grouping of Powers aimed directly or indirectly at either of them;

(c) Both Powers to remain in future continuously in touch with each other by way of consultation;

(d) The Pact to run for ten years, with provision for extending it a further five years.



## DEADLY TRAPS FOR THE UNWARY

The queer objects resembling casseroles, which are being examined with such interest by the French soldiers in the photograph above, are unexploded mines placed by the Germans to harass the Allies' advance into their territory just after the outbreak of war. Clearing the ground in No Man's Land of land mines and similar death-dealing devices was a task calling for great coolness and no small measure of courage.

*Photo, Sport & General*

MAP OF WESTERN FRONT OF NATURAL RELIEF

This map over which the battle lines of 1914-18 and 1939-40 have been superimposed, shows clearly the natural defences of the Western Front. The Maginot Line and the Siegfried Line are also shown, as well as the Rhine and the Moselle rivers, the Ardennes and Kaiserstuhl as approximately 300 miles.

*Special Map — by Arthur Robinson*




**MEMEL GREETS ITS NEW MASTER**

*Photo, Wide World*

Within a week of the occupation of Czecho-Slovakia the German Reich again extended its frontiers—this time by annexing the territory of Memel, which by the Convention of 1924 was an autonomous territory under Lithuanian sovereignty. On March 23, 1939, Hitler arrived in Memel on the battleship "Deutschland" and addressed the inhabitants, whom he welcomed as "old members of the German nation and the youngest citizens of the Great German Reich." Above is a part of the crowd which listened to Hitler's speech in the Theatre Square, Memel.

Astounding though the news of this Pact was to the people at large, a hint of a possible re-orientation of Russian foreign policy had been contained in a statement made to Sir Nevile Henderson by Baron von Weizsaecker, State Secretary at the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs, on August 15, four days before the conclusion of the Soviet-German Commercial Agreement. Reporting to Lord Halifax on his talks with von Weizsaecker, Sir Nevile said :

" I was impressed by Baron von Weizsaecker's detachment and calm. He seemed very confident, and professed to believe that Russian assistance to the Poles would not only be entirely negligible, but that the U.S.S.R. would even in the end join in sharing in the Polish spoils."

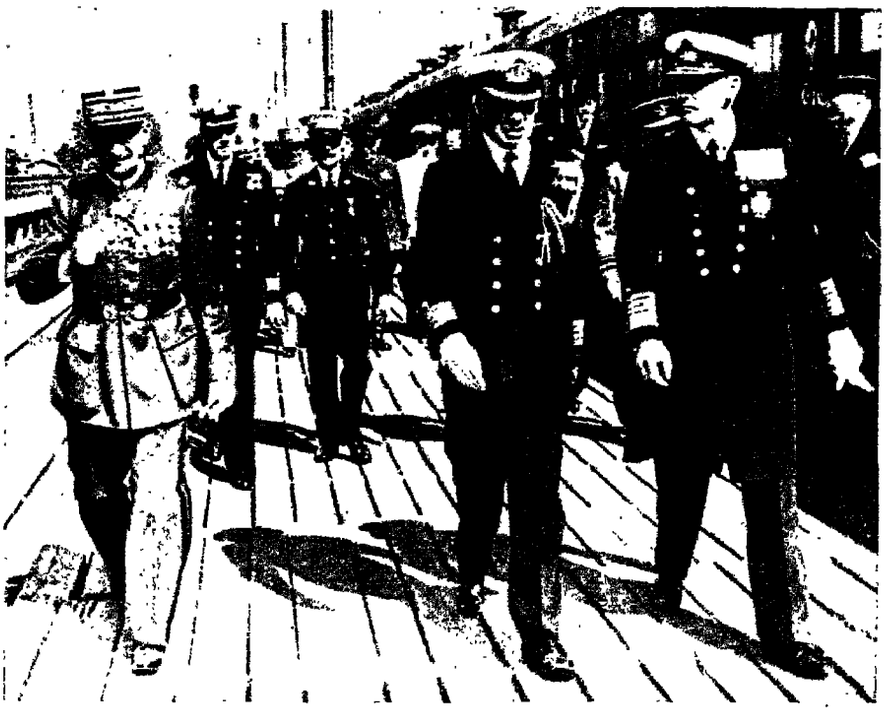
Until the actual wording of the Russo-German Pact was revealed, it had been hoped in many quarters outside Germany that the Agreement would contain an escape clause, such as occurs in many of Russia's Non-Aggression Pacts with other countries, permitting Russia to denounce the Pact in case of an act of aggression by the other contracting party. But when it became known that the Pact, as worded and signed, contained no loophole of this sort, the attitude of the Allies towards possible German aggression against Poland did not change in the least. Soon after the Berlin announcement of the intended signature of the Pact, Mr. Chamberlain returned from Scotland to London. The British Cabinet met, and a communiqué was issued declaring that reports of a Pact to be concluded between Russia and Germany would in no way affect Britain's obligations to Poland.

On August 22, the day before Herr von Ribbentrop flew to Moscow, Mr. Chamberlain wrote personally to Herr Hitler (*see* Historic Documents, No. 1), referring to certain precautionary measures taken in Britain, and adding :

" These steps have . . . been rendered necessary by the military movements which have been reported from Germany and by the fact that apparently the announcement of a German-Soviet agreement is taken in some quarters in Berlin to indicate that intervention by Great Britain on behalf of Poland is no longer a contingency that need be reckoned with. No greater mistake could be made

" Whatever may prove to be the nature of the German-Soviet Agreement, it cannot alter Great Britain's obligation to Poland which His Majesty's Government have stated in public repeatedly and plainly, and which they are determined to fulfil."

In a speech in the House of Commons made on August 24, 1939, Mr. Chamberlain reviewed the rapidly worsening European situation. He again stated firmly that Britain would honour her obligations to Poland if that country were the victim of aggression by Germany. The firm attitude of the British Cabinet met with the undivided approval of British public opinion and the British Press. There was indignation that Russia should have been negotiating with Germany at the same time as the Anglo-French military mission, sent out at her instigation, was conducting confidential talks in Moscow. In some political circles, on the other hand, it was felt that Russia had not been treated with sufficient circumspection and courtesy by Britain in the past.



**BRITISH MISSION ARRIVES IN MOSCOW**

**Following the visit of Mr. William Strang to Moscow in June, 1939, with a view to investigating the possibilities of a British, French and Russian pact against aggression, military, naval and air experts went to Moscow in August to initiate staff talks between the three countries. Above, General Doumenc (left), leader of the French Mission, and Admiral Sir Reginald Plunkett-Erle-Erle-Drax (right) are seen on their arrival in Moscow.**

*Photo, Planet News*

The Pact was a mortal blow to a comprehensive Anti-Aggression Front; it ended the Franco-Russian Alliance, and was interpreted by many as an invitation to Herr Hitler to invade Poland. With the prospects of peace now almost defeated, Britain pushed forward her measures for defence. France, also badly shaken by news of the Pact, delayed no longer. Within two days of the signature of the Pact more than half a million young Frenchmen were sent to the Maginot Line, and the Government took over munitions factories. M. Daladier, after consultation with his Cabinet and France's military chiefs, recalled on leave M. Naggiar, the French Ambassador in Moscow. France's preparations were indubitable evidence that France, like Britain, intended standing by her pledge to Poland.

Curiously enough, it was Poland which took the news of the Pact with the greatest imperturbability. German troops were now massing on Poland's western, southern and northern frontiers, but Poland maintained that she had never counted on Russian help to defeat invasion. Polish military experts pointed out that aid to Poland was not a question of more men —there were Poles enough able and willing to fight an invader. The difficulty was one of supplying large armies, in a country with communications so poor as those in many parts of Poland, with the many essentials of modern warfare. While they would have welcomed Russian aid in materials and 'planes, the Poles considered that the few railway lines between Poland and Russia would make but a small contribution to supply problems, especially if aggravated by the addition of Russians to the already numerous Polish troops. Confident of her ability to give a good account of herself, Poland manned her frontiers and awaited the by now inevitable German onslaught (*see* Chapter 9).

**Poland's Calm**

In both Germany and Russia the reaction to the Pact among the public was one of bewilderment, which gave way in Germany to tremendous enthusiasm and then to disappointment it became plain that



**NAVAL OFFICER BECOME DIPLOMAT**

Baron von Weizsaecker (above), State Secretary at the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs, was for twenty years an officer of the German Navy, before he entered the Diplomatic Service in 1920.

*Photo, Planet News*

Britain and France intended standing by Poland.

Nazis who had been taught for six years that Russia was their bitterest enemy were at first shocked by news of the Pact. But they rejoiced that "encirclement" by the Democracies was at an end, and that if Germany had to fight to obtain her "rights" it would be on one front only—against Poland. The Pact, the Nazis reasoned, would also help to keep the obstinate Czechs quiet; the German Press boasted that the Rome-Berlin Axis was now "blockade-proof": on the day Herr von Ribbentrop flew to Moscow, cafés along Berlin's fashionable Kurfürstendamm overflowed with crowds in holiday mood. This enthusiasm was not shared by some of the middle-class Germans, who wondered whether Hitler had not opened the door to Communism in Germany.

**Nazi Joy at Russian Pact**

As the fateful week wore on, however, and it became apparent that the Pact would not stop Britain and France from intervening to save their ally, Poland, Germans became apprehensive. General mobilization measures were put in hand; the cafés and restaurants emptied. When, after having cancelled the Tannenberg rally which was to have commemorated the German victory over the Russians during the Great War, Hitler returned, tired and strained, to his Berlin Chancellery, the customary cheering crowds were absent.

In Russia, voiceless though the masses were in the matter of foreign policy, the agreement with a country they had been taught for years to regard as a "Fascist aggressor" called for some further explanation from the Kremlin. In the Moscow newspaper "Izvestia," Marshal Voroshilov, Soviet Commissar for War, denied that negotiations with Britain and France were broken off because of the Russo-German Non-Aggression Pact, and said that insuperable difficulties had arisen during the discussions. Poland, he added, refused to permit Russian troops on her soil. The Marshal went on

"Just as the British and American troops in the past World War would have been unable to collaborate with the French armed forces if they had had no possibility of operating in French territory, the Soviet forces could not participate in military collaboration if they were not allowed access to Polish territory."

A similar declaration was made by M. Molotov, Soviet Foreign Commissar, addressing the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union when the Russo-German Pact was formally ratified on August 31. The Poles, Molotov alleged, rejected assistance from the U.S.S.R. He further declared that Britain and France looked with disfavour on any Pact which might have tended to increase the strength and influence of the Soviet Union, and that the Polish attitude was supported by Britain and France. The Pact with Germany, Molotov added, was in the interests of both the Reich and the Soviet Union, and therefore in the interests of the U.S.S.R.

The firmness of Britain and France, together with Poland's calm and determined attitude, showed how groundless was Herr von Ribbentrop's assumption that the Pact would induce the Allies to abandon Poland, or the latter to make concessions regarding Danzig and the Corridor. Further, it became very soon apparent that the Pact had had an unfortunate influence on Germany's Axis partners, Japan and Italy. Japan felt that Germany's conclusion of a pact with the arch-enemy of the Anti-Comintern group was a slight to her dignity. Baron Hiranuma, the Japanese Premier (who came to power in January largely because of his Fascist leanings), resigned with the whole of his Cabinet. He was replaced by the Conservative Nobuyuki Abe, who, it was stated, would take Japan out of the confusing maze of Totalitarian morals, attempt a strong policy against China, and renounce world ambitions as far as Japan was concerned. The cooling of German-Japanese relations was welcome to Britain, as removing a possible cause of Anglo-Japanese conflict in the Far East.

Italy greeted the German-Soviet Pact with officially inspired enthusiasm, as meaning "death to the encirclers.' Some Fascist editors went so far as to explain that Fascism was a proletarian doctrine, and that there was no reason why Italy should not march with Russia. Poland was warned to come to terms with Germany. But several factors came to damp this initial enthusiasm.

Roman Catholic Spain, in which Italy was so vitally interested, was distinctly antagonistic to collaboration with Russia. In many influential Spanish circles the dread had existed that Spain, in return for the help given against the Republicans by Germany and Italy, would be forced into a European war as an ally of these two countries. The Soviet-German Pact gave Spain a way out. Spain could not fight in the same ranks with that Communism which she had been trying for so long to stamp out. General Franco hastened demobilization and gave France assurances of his neutrality.

**Effect on Spain**

Another factor affecting Italy's attitude was the aversion of the Pope and Roman Catholics in Italy generally to Soviet Russia and her doctrines. When to this was added the firmness of the Allies in spite of the Pact, Mussolini spoke to Herr Hitler in an endeavour to



**AMBASSADOR RECALLED**

After the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, M. Daladier recalled on leave the French ambassador at Moscow, M. Paul-Emile Naggiar (above). M. Naggiar was at one time France's ambassador to Czecho-Slovakia.

*Photo, Wide World*



M. Kaarel Selters (above), Estonia's Foreign Minister, was invited to Moscow on September 24, 1939, to discuss matters with the Soviet.
*Photo, Wide World*





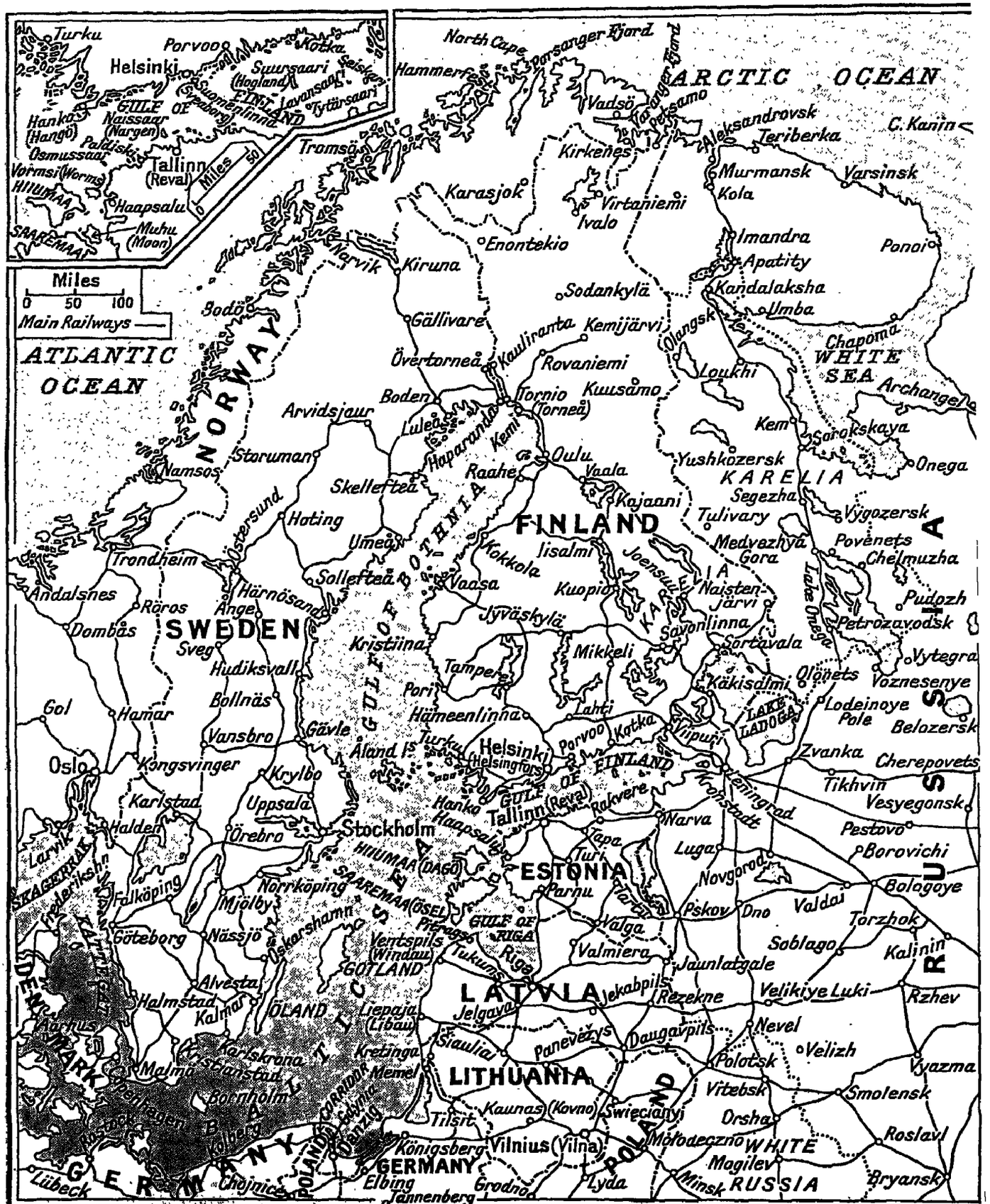




## RUSSIA OVERSHADOWS ESTONIA

1. Soviet destroyer "Minsk" firing a salute on entering the Tallinn roads. 2. Typical landscape on Hiiumaa (Dagö) Island, leased to Russia as a naval base under the Soviet - Estonian Pact of September 28, 1939. 3. Castle of Ruvesari, capital of the island of Saaremaa (Oesel), on which the Soviet have also secured a naval base. 4. Soviet Army Commandant Menetshov (left) shaking hands with General Nikolai Reek, Chief of Staff of the Estonian Army.

*Photos, E.N.A., Planet News, Keystone*




**STORM CENTRE OF THE NORTH: SCANDINAVIA AND THE BALTIC STATES**

After claiming her share of Poland, the Soviet Union turned towards the Baltic States and by veiled threats succeeded in gaining strategic control of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Next came the turn of Finland, which strongly resisted all Russian attempts to encroach upon her independence. Thus Russia seized from the Baltic States the very islands and harbours which, only a few months before, Germany was urging these States to fortify against the Soviet.

slow down the march of events; failing in this effort, the Duce remained neutral.

While the Pact alienated Germany's Axis friends, it inspired the deepest apprehension in other neutral States, which felt themselves exposed to the powerful combination represented by Germany and Russia. Bulgaria was the only European country which welcomed the Pact; strong Leftist influences in that country regarded with some hope the prospect of intervention in Bulgaria by their brother Slavs in Soviet Russia, especially as regards Bulgarian claims on Rumanian Dobrudja. Turkey remained faithful to her friendship with Britain, in spite of Germany's attempts to use the Pact for obtaining political and enonomic concessions from her. Other small Central European and Balkan countries hastened to resolve both internal troubles and differences among themselves, in order to consolidate national unity and present a strong front to penetration from whichever direction it might come.

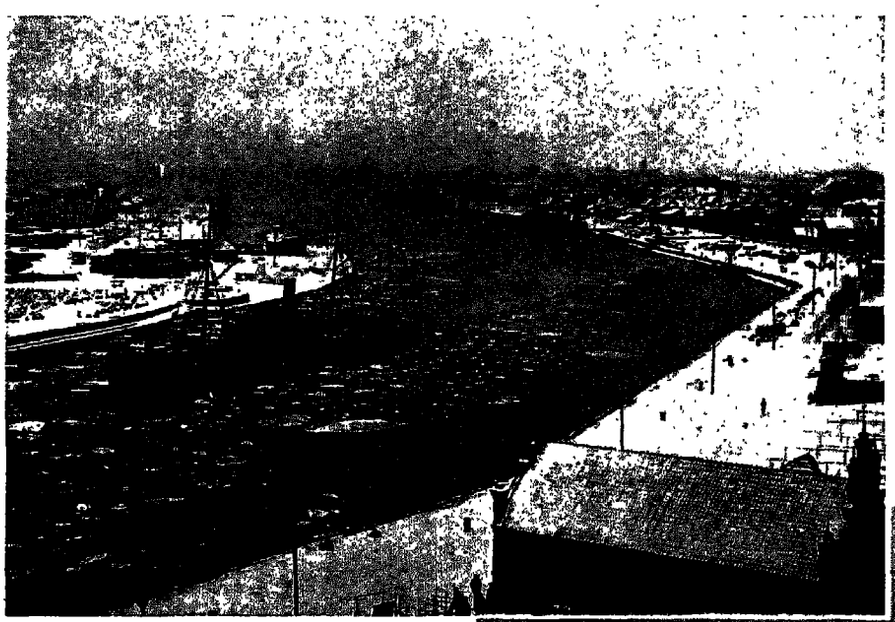
**Neutrals' Apprehension**

Most unfortunately placed of all were Finland and the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. In Latvia and Estonia the Germans were disliked because it was largely the German Baltic barons who had owned their territories under pre-War Russia, and who had been instrumental in oppressing the peasantry. But fear of the U.S.S.R. was inspired in Finland, Estonia and Latvia, by Russia's insistence on an Anglo-Soviet guarantee of their integrity. This, they suspected, was merely to afford Russia an excuse to intervene on any pretext, and would again bring their lands under Russian domination. They wondered whether the Pact meant the abandonment of German influence in the Baltic, which would thus place them politically and economically at the mercy of Russia.

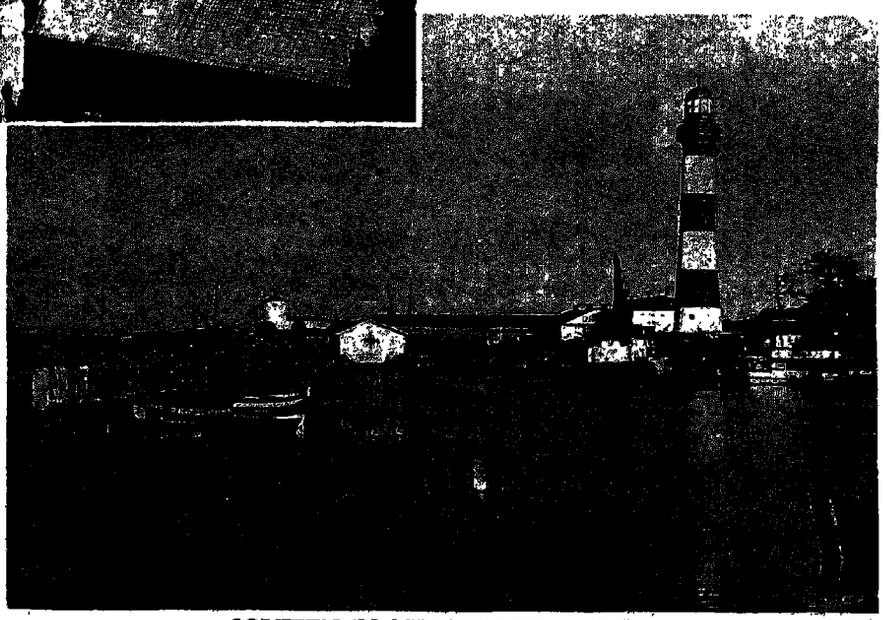
But even more perplexed were sympathizers with the Russian experiment throughout the world. The Pact between Nazism and Communism created a hopeless division of opinion in the ranks of Communists and Left Wing supporters, and it was an open question whether Russia had not lost in moral support of this nature more than she had gained by smashing the Anti-Comintern Front.

The apprehensions of the Baltic States were well founded, but it was Poland who was to feel the first effects of the strange friendship between the Wilhelmstrasse and the Kremlin. Within sixteen days of Germany's invasion of Poland Russian troops also crossed the Polish frontiers as invaders, completing the collapse of Polish resistance.

With the Polish question "liquidated," Russia turned her attention to her small neighbours, and improved on the technique of Hitler by issuing a series of invitations to the Foreign Ministers of the Baltic States. M. Kaarel Selters, the Estonian Foreign Minister, was summoned to Moscow on September 24. Estonia, as the smallest, most centrally situated and most exposed of the Baltic countries, was the obvious first choice for Russian penetration. On September 28 a Pact of Mutual Assistance and Trade was concluded between the



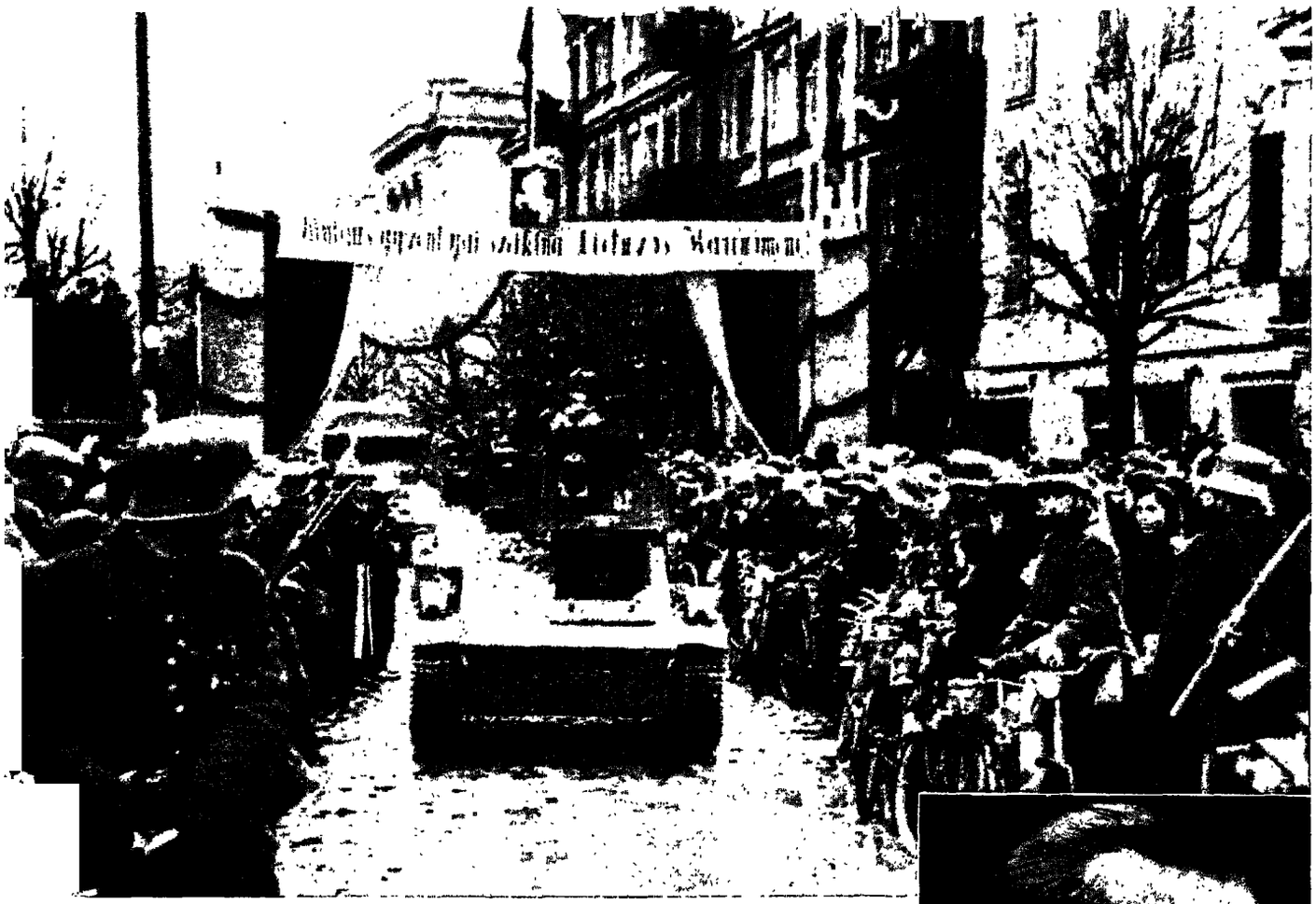




**SOVIET'S FOOTHOLDS IN LATVIA**

**The Latvian ports of Ventspils (Windau), at top left, and Liepaja (Libau), above, were leased to the Soviet Union as naval and air bases under the Russo-Latvian Pact ratified on October 10, 1939. The portrait is of M. Wilhelms Munters, Foreign Minister of Latvia.**

*Photos, I.N.A., Planet News*





VILNA WELCOMES LITHUANIAN TROOPS AGAIN

On October 10, 1939, Russia ceded Vilna, taken from Poland during the previous month, to Lithuania. Six days later Lithuanian troops, above, entered the city. On the right is M. Juozas Urbsys, the Lithuanian Foreign Minister. Below, Lithuanian troops in the Vilna district.

*Photos, Sport & General; Planet News; Press Topics*



U.S.S.R. and Estonia, whereby Russia secured the right to maintain naval
lease
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certain transit rights along the railways and waterways of the U.S.S.R., to Murmansk, Sorokskaya and to Black Sea ports. The text of the Treaty is given in Historic Documents No. 32.

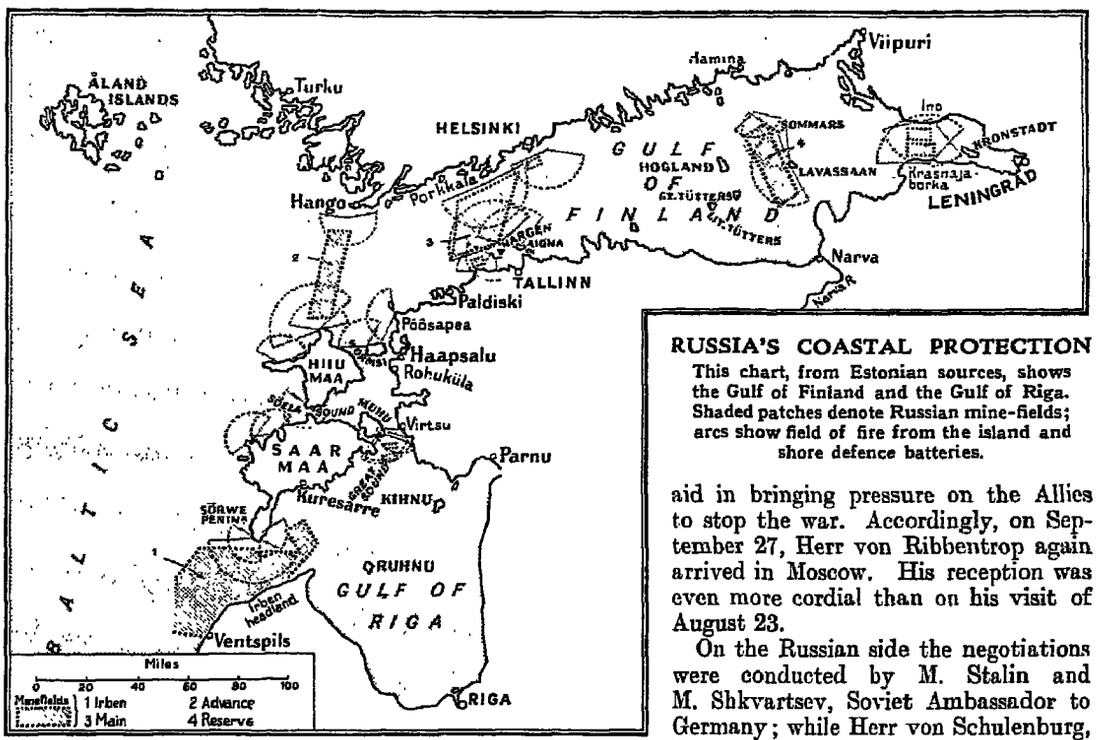
Russia, by this agreement, rendered abortive the Estonian-Latvian Mutual Assistance Treaty; she gained control of strategic points in Estonia sufficient to render armed Estonian resistance dangerous and futile; she assured to herself the command of the southern approaches to the Gulf of Finland, thus giving added security to her great naval base of Kronstadt; and she obtained permanently ice-free Baltic ports and a dominating position over Latvia's capital and trade, since Saaremaa Island lies athwart the entrance to the Gulf of Riga.

Latvia's turn came next. Deprived of the possibility of joint resistance with Estonia to Russia's demands, M. Wilhelms Munters, the Latvian Foreign Minister, had no option but to submit. Latvia, like Estonia, was forced into a mutual assistance pact with Russia (see Historic Documents No. 33), whereby both Powers pledged themselves to universal

(including military) assistance in case of a direct attack or threat of attack by any other European Power. Latvia granted Russia the right to establish naval bases at Liepaja (Libau) and Ventspils (Windau), and to build several aerodromes. Russia was further allowed to set up artillery bases along the coast.

Similar conditions were then imposed on Lithuania who, now that Russia had entered Poland, had a common frontier with the U.S.S.R. But, in return for the loss of her independence, Lithuania obtained partial compensation in the return of Vilna. The powers of the Baltic States to resist Russian demands had been undermined by the collapse of their export trade through German control of the Baltic.

With the conquest of Poland, Germany had attained her immediate aims, but the Allies showed no desire to call a halt to the conflict just because aggression had again been temporarily successful. In his dilemma Hitler again looked to Russia. In return for the concessions made willingly or unwillingly by Germany in Poland and the Baltic, he hoped to obtain Russian aid in bringing pressure on the Allies to stop the war. Accordingly, on September 27, Herr von Ribbentrop again arrived in Moscow. His reception was even more cordial than on his visit of August 23.




**RUSSIA'S COASTAL PROTECTION**

**This chart, from Estonian sources, shows the Gulf of Finland and the Gulf of Riga. Shaded patches denote Russian mine-fields; arcs show field of fire from the island and shore defence batteries.**

On the Russian side the negotiations were conducted by M. Stalin and M. Shkvartsev, Soviet Ambassador to Germany; while Herr von Schulenburg, German Ambassador in Moscow, assisted Herr von Ribbentrop. The outcome of the talks was a "Treaty of Amity and the Frontier between the U.S.S.R. and Germany." It defined the common Russian-German boundaries in conquered Poland, and rejected "interference" by Third Powers with the boundaries; the Treaty was supplemented by a remarkable joint declaration, purporting to throw the blame for continuance of the conflict on Britain and France.

In letters exchanged between the German and Russian Foreign Ministers simultaneously with the signing of the Treaty of Amity, extensive economic collaboration between the two countries was provided for. Diplomatic phrases could not, however, conceal the fact that, in the opening stages of the Second World War, the advantages of this Russo-German rapprochement had accrued mainly to Russia. The Baltic was no longer a German but a Russian sea. Germany had conquered Poland, but it was Russia that reaped the greatest benefits, including the oilfields of Lwow and a common boundary with Rumania for expansion further south, if she chose. Russia had also smashed the Anti-Comintern front and had alienated from Germany a number of her potential allies against Britain. Cold self-interest would still seem to denote that Russia had little to gain by making still closer her relations with Germany, but her future policy remained an enigma, as in the months preceding the war.



**SHARING THE PREY**

***In the photograph M. Molotov, the Soviet Foreign Minister, is seen seated at his desk checking over the plan for the dismemberment of Poland. Standing behind him are von Ribbentrop, the Nazi Foreign Minister, and Stalin, the Dictator of the Kremlin.***

***Photo, Wide World***

## *Historic Documents. XXXV–XLI*

# *BRITISH DOMINIONS SUPPORT THE MOTHERLAND*

*All great nations of the British Commonwealth were consulted before the declaration of war, and that all were on the side of freedom and justice is shown by the following declarations made by spokesmen of the Dominions on and after September 3, 1939*

MR. R. G. MENZIES, PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA, IN A BROADCAST, SEPTEMBER 3, 1939:

IT is my melancholy duty to announce officially that in consequence of Germany's persistence in her invasion of Poland, Great Britain has declared war, and that as a result Australia is also at war.

Great Britain and France, with the co-operation of the Dominions, have struggled to avoid this tragedy. They have patiently kept the door for negotiation open, and given no cause for aggression; but they have failed. We, therefore, as a great family of nations, are involved in the struggle; we must at all costs win, and we believe in our hearts that we will win. . . .

Bitter as we all feel about this wanton crime, this moment is not for rhetoric but for quiet thinking—that calm fortitude which rests on the unconquerable spirit of man created by God in his image; truth is with us in the battle, and truth must win. In the bitter months ahead calmness, resoluteness, confidence and hard work will be required as never before.

Australia is ready to see it through. May God in His mercy and compassion grant that the world may soon be delivered of this agony.

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF NEW ZEALAND, SEPTEMBER 3, 1939:

WITH reference to the intimation just received that a state of war exists between the United Kingdom and Germany, his Majesty's Government in New Zealand desire immediately to associate themselves with his Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in honouring their pledged word.

They entirely concur with the action taken, which they regard as inevitably enforced upon the British Commonwealth if the cause of justice, freedom and democracy is to endure in this world.

The existence of a state of war with Germany has accordingly been proclaimed in New Zealand, and H.M. New Zealand Government would be grateful if H.M. Government in the United Kingdom would take any steps that may be necessary to indicate to the German Government that H.M. Government in New Zealand associate themselves in this matter with the action taken by H.M. Government in the United Kingdom.

The New Zealand Government wish to offer to the British Government the fullest assurance of all possible support. They are convinced that the step that has been taken will meet with the approval of the people of this Dominion, and they will give the fullest consideration in due course to any suggestion of the British Government as to the method or methods by which the Dominion can best assist in the common cause.

GENERAL SMUTS, IN THE PARLIAMENT OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA, SEPTEMBER 4, 1939:

GENERAL HERTZOG has said that this matter of Danzig is a Polish affair with which South Africa has nothing to do. But I am profoundly convinced that, although Danzig and the Polish Corridor were the immediate occasion of war, the real issue goes far beyond Danzig and Poland and touches South Africa.

General Hertzog has made a statement which I regard as resembling a complete justification of Herr Hitler. I do not think that the people of the Union, in their vital interest as South Africans, could hope to justify that view. Nothing could be more fatal for South Africa, poor as it is in defence, and rich as it is in resources, to dissociate itself directly or indirectly from its friends in the Commonwealth.

It is not only a question of loyalty and self-respect—which I assume we all feel deeply; it is a question of importance and of the deepest interest to the future of South Africa.

If we dissociated ourselves deliberately and conspicuously from the line of action taken by the other members of the Commonwealth, we are going to get what we deserve, and the day will come—and it will not be far off—when the same treatment will be applied to us. And when the day of trouble comes—when the German demand for the return of South-West Africa is made at the point of the bayonet, we shall stand alone. . . .

GENERAL SMUTS, SEPTEMBER 6, AFTER DECLARING THAT THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA WAS AT WAR WITH GERMANY:

THE House, which was free to have decided otherwise, takes a stand for the defence of freedom and the destruction of Hitlerism, and all it implies.

The interests of South Africa, however, are our primary concern. Participation must necessarily be limited by considerations of geography and the special conditions which attach to this country. Our primary duty is to place our own defences in the highest state of efficiency, and we can best serve the cause for which we stand by so strengthening our own defences and by so surveying our national resources as to render the Union safe against any inroads from the enemy.

LORD TWEEDSMUIR, GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF CANADA, IN A SPEECH TO THE CANADIAN PARLIAMENT, SEPTEMBER 7, 1939:

YOU have been summoned at the earliest moment in order that the Government may seek authority for measures necessary for the defence of Canada and for co-operation in the determined effort which is being made to resist further aggression and prevent appeal to force instead of to pacific means in the settlement of international disputes.

Already the militia, naval service, and Air Force have been placed on active service and certain other provisions have been made for the defence of our coast and our internal security under the War Measures Act and other authority.

I need not speak of the extreme gravity of this hour. There can have been few, if any, more critical in the history of the world. The people of Canada are facing the crisis with the same fortitude that today supports the peoples of the nations of the British Commonwealth.

My Ministers are convinced that Canada is prepared to unite in a national effort to defend to the utmost the liberties and institutions which are our common heritage.

M. LAPOINTE, CANADIAN MINISTER OF JUSTICE, IN A SPEECH IN THE CANADIAN HOUSE OF COMMONS, SEPTEMBER 9, 1939:

I HATE war with all my heart and conscience. But devotion to peace does not mean ignorance or blindness. . . . England has worked for peace. I know it. It is a base calumny to say that England is responsible for anything that has led to the present conflict. France has worked continually for peace, and it is a slander to say that France is responsible in any way for the conflict. These nations have gone so far in their efforts to preserve peace that they have been the subject of strong and bitter criticism on the part of many people in their respective countries because of what was called with derision the "appeasement" policy. . . .

God give Canadians the light which will indicate to them where their duty lies in this hour of trial so that our children and our children's children may inherit a land where freedom and peace shall prevail; where our social, political and religious institutions may be secure and from which the tyrannical doctrines of Nazism and Communism are for ever banished. . . .

PROCLAMATION ANNOUNCING A STATE OF WAR BETWEEN CANADA AND GERMANY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1939:

WHEREAS by and with the advice of our PRIVY COUNCIL for Canada, we have signified our approval of the issuing of a Proclamation in the Canada Gazette declaring that a state of war with the German Reich exists and has existed in our Dominion of Canada as from the 10th day of September, 1939.

Therefore we do hereby declare and proclaim that a state of war with the German Reich exists and has existed in our Dominion of Canada as from the 10th day of September, 1939.

# *INDIA RALLIES ROUND THE IMPERIAL THRONE*

In spite of the many problems that beset the people of India, the response to England's call for support at the outbreak of war was unanimous. Even Mahatma Gandhi said: "I am not thinking just now of India's deliverance. It will come, but what will it be worth if England and France fall?"

VICEROY OF INDIA IN A BROADCAST, SEPTEMBER 3, 1939:

IN a cause such as this I am certain that the whole-hearted sympathy and support of all this great country, whether British India or the Indian States, will be forthcoming without distinction of class, creed, race or political party.

I am confident that on a day on which all that is most precious and most significant in the civilization of the modern world stands in peril, India will make a contribution on the side of human freedom as against the rule of force, and will play a part worthy of her place among the great nations and historic civilizations of the world.

MESSAGE TO INDIA FROM THE KING EMPEROR, SEPTEMBER 11:

IN these days when the whole of civilization is threatened, the widespread attachment of India to the cause in which we have taken up arms has been a source of deep satisfaction to me. I also value most highly the many generous offers of assistance made to me by the Princes and peoples of India.

I am confident that in the struggle upon which I and my peoples have now entered we can count on sympathy and support from every quarter of the Indian continent in the face of the common danger.

Britain is fighting for no selfish ends, but for the maintenance of a principle vital to the future of mankind—the principle that the relations between civilized States must be regulated, not by force, but by reason and law, so that men may live free from the terror of war, to pursue the happiness and the well-being which should be the destiny of mankind.

VICEROY OF INDIA IN THE UPPER HOUSE OF THE CENTRAL LEGISLATURE OF INDIA, SEPTEMBER 11, 1939:

NOTHING could be more significant than the unanimity of approach of all in India—Princes, leaders, great political parties, the ordinary man and woman—or of their political contributions and the offers of personal service which have already reached me from the Princes and people of India.

There could not be more striking evidence of the depth of the appeal of the issues now before us. I am confident that India will speak and act as one, so that her contribution may be worthy of her ancient name.

SIR JAGDISH PRASAD, LEADER OF THE UPPER HOUSE OF THE CENTRAL LEGISLATURE OF INDIA, SEPTEMBER 12, 1939:

INDIA'S ultimate fate will be decided on the battlefields of Europe. If the Nazi dictatorship triumphs, then all is lost for those who value freedom, justice and the reign of the law. It will be in keeping with our spiritual traditions and in harmony with the highest teaching of our saints and philosophers if we perform our obvious duty without thought of reward or profit.

MARQUESS OF ZETLAND, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS, SEPTEMBER 26 1939:

THE Government highly appreciate the support they have so far received from all classes in India. From the Princes of India have been received most generous offers of men, money and personal service, and from individuals in all parts of the country messages of sympathy, help and support have been pouring in. His Majesty's Government have noticed with especial gratification the statements which have recently been made by the Prime Ministers of the Punjab and of Bengal offering unconditional aid to them in the struggle, and they have also observed, with great appreciation, the aid which has been given to the Governors by the Ministries in all provinces of British India in carrying through such measures as have been proved to be necessary as a result of the outbreak of war.

The resort to force by the German Government, following as it did a series of broken pledges unparalleled surely in the history of mankind, has been unequivocally condemned by all the political parties in India, whose leaders have expressed their unqualified sympathy with the victims of aggression, and it is abundantly clear that the triumph of the principles for which the Nazi Government stands would be regarded as a calamity of the utmost magnitude by all classes and communities in India. . . .

MAHARAJA OF BIKANIR, AT A REVIEW OF THE STATE ARMY OCTOBER 22, 1939:

WAR is not a time when any keen soldier desires to sit at home in ease and luxury; for him the only place is the field of battle.

It is the dearest wish of my heart as a Rathore Rajput to take my place in the fighting line, and long ago I offered to place my own sword and that of my son at the disposal of his Imperial Majesty.

There are some who, out of their solicitude, say that I am too old now at 60 to fight and to face the rigours of a campaign. I admit I am neither as young nor in such good health as when I went to fight in France, Flanders and Egypt a quarter of a century ago, but no Rajput is ever too old to fight. Like every one of you, I am desperately keen to proceed to the front, and you may therefore be sure that I shall leave no stone unturned to gratify my burning desire to fight once again for our Emperor.

Whatever the future has in store for each and everyone of us, whatever units of our army may be privileged to fight under the British flag in this war, I am confident of one thing, and that is the gallantry and loyalty of my army; and that every man from Bikanir will, when the time comes, give a good account of himself.

MAHARAJA OF BIKANIR, AT A DURBAR IN HONOUR OF HIS 59TH BIRTHDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1939:

AS was only to be expected, the Princes and the States of India have without exception rallied round the Imperial Throne and the Empire in this great hour of trial. And we of the Indian States thank God and can take pride in the fact that, despite the Princes having problems of their own which require a satisfactory solution, our loyal offers of service and co-operation in this war are unconditional and unqualified, that we have made it clear to the world that our loyalty demands no price, and that no sordid motives of bargain or barter have any place in our thoughts and acts. . . .

As has been so aptly described by . . . his Highness the Maharaja Jam Sahib of Nawanagar, where the King Emperor leads the Princes follow, anxious to do all that they can in support of a righteous cause. Let me add that the Princes stand with their swords drawn round the King Emperor's Throne, ready to risk their lives and to stake their all in conformity with the teachings of religion, their treaty obligations, and their magnificent tradition of loyalty, which is also the proud heritage of their Motherland. . . .

This would also not be an unsuitable opportunity of stating that the States must strongly repudiate the claim of any political party in British India, however influential and important, to speak or to act for or in any other way to represent the views and standpoints of the Indian States and their people. . . .

We are fighting to resist aggression whether directed against ourselves or others, to break the bondage of fear daily encroaching upon the world. And we must not forget that should Hitler win this war all talk of freedom and democracy for India will vanish like thin smoke, and brute force and the doctrine that might is right will reign supreme. . . .

It is my profound conviction that in these troublous times, when everything is so much subjected to revolutionary changes and upheavals, the great Empire over which his Imperial Majesty reigns offers the one stable element, the firm rock on which a peaceful world order could be raised, the one institution in which under a beneficent spirit of peace human effort in every direction could find its fullest realization.



**DOMINION PREMIERS WHO STOOD WITH BRITAIN**

Top left, the Rt. Hon. R. G. Menzies, P.C., K.C., the Australian Prime Minister, who declared: "We stand with Britain." Top right, the Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, P.C., the Canadian Premier, who told Britain that Canada "will stand by her side." Lower left, the Rt. Hon. M. J. Savage, P.C., Prime Minister of New Zealand, who said: "We range ourselves without fear beside Britain." Lower right, the Rt. Hon. J. C. Smuts, P.C., South Africa's Premier and Defence Minister, who announced that South Africa "takes a stand for the defence of freedom."

*Photos, Howard Coster; Photopress; Vandyk*

Chapter 20

# THE EMPIRE MAKES COMMON CAUSE IN THE CRUSADE AGAINST AGGRESSION

*South Africa Spurns Neutrality—The All-India Congress Party—Burma, Ceylon and Singapore—Loyalty of Fiji—Prompt Action by Rhodesia and Kenya—Canada as Empire Training Centre for the Royal Air Force—Australia and New Zealand Participate in Scheme—A Canadian Expeditionary Force—India's Potential Military Aid—The Empire's Economic Co-operation*

In September, 1939, the least warlike and most extensive Empire in history found itself at war against the same common enemy for the second time within a quarter of a century. During an epoch unparalleled for extraordinary events, this may well be described by future historians as the most significant. Moreover, it can be coupled with the political and economic support of the United States for this vast Empire.

The aggressive nation that again united the British Empire in war for the sake of peaceful security challenged not merely the same forces as in 1914 but a greatly increased material and moral power. What was still obscure in 1914 was plainly defined in 1939, and Europe's attempts to establish a new form of collective security, though doomed to failure, had clarified the purposes of international politics. Apart from this clearer purpose, the Empire's immense resources had been greatly developed since the end of the first Great War, owing to world-wide economic processes rather than to any far-sighted planning by British politicians. The previous defeat of Germany also had much increased the territories of the Empire, especially in East and South-West Africa, and immensely strengthened it in a strategic sense.

The last of the international crises organized by Nazi machinations ended with the outbreak of the war, and the great Dominions, the Colonies, Protectorates and Mandated Territories, and the immensely complicated Indian Empire declared their loyalty and made offers of material help. The succession of messages sent to the King and to the English Prime Minister told the world how all these countries promptly ranged themselves with varying degrees of support behind the people of a small island close to the north-west coast of the Continent which was threatened by the domination of Germany.

In Historic Documents Nos. 35 to 48 may be re-read some of the typical declarations by official spokesmen of the Empire, but the unofficial statements of public speakers and the press showed that unanimity in the common cause transcended party sentiments. Magnificent little New Zealand was at once in the front rank, her declaration of war on September 3 being followed the next day by a rush of volunteers for enlistment. The New Zealand Parliament's resolution approving the declaration of war was unanimous. Mr. R. G. Menzies, the

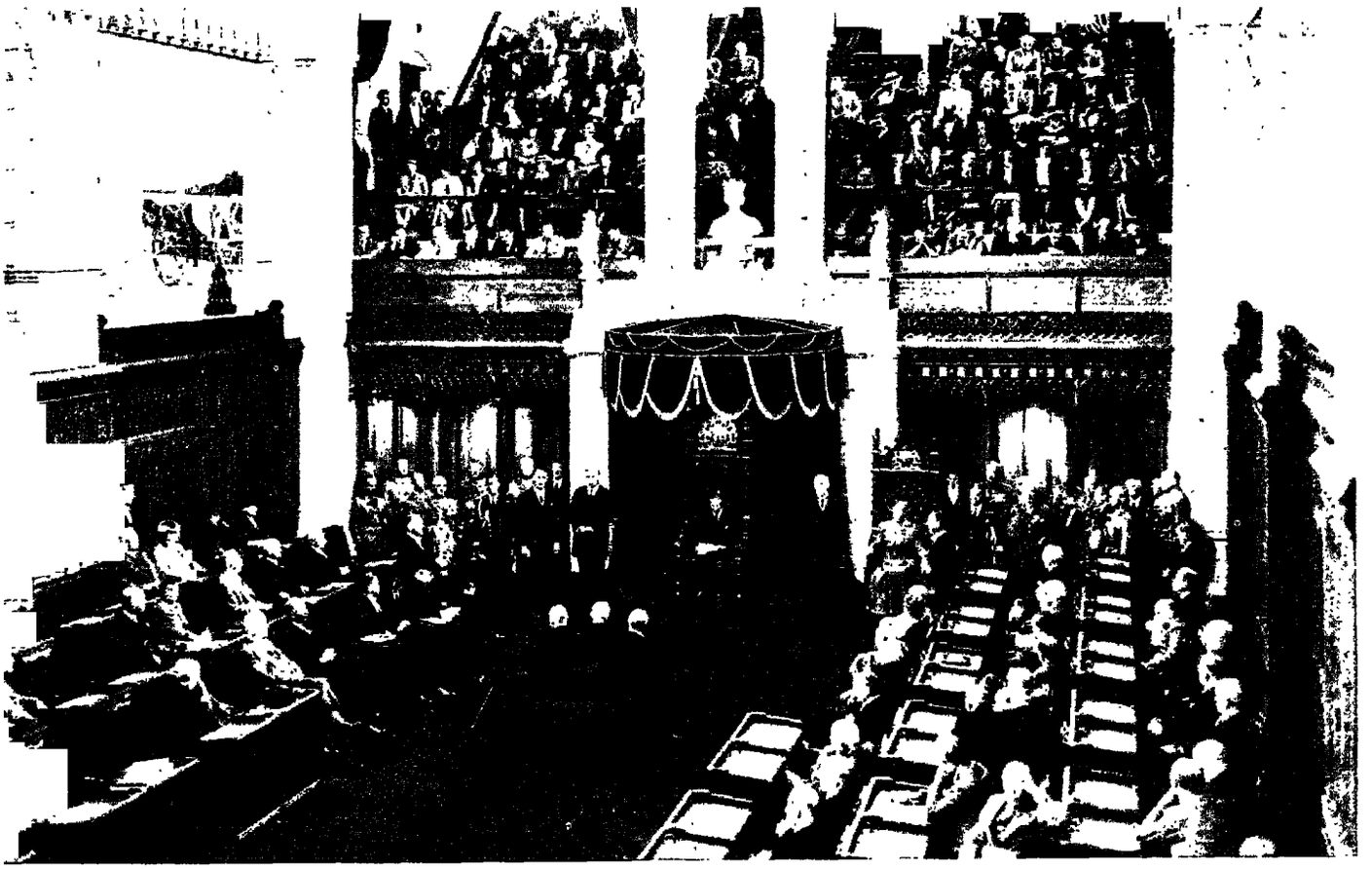
**Imperial Unity**

NEW ZEALANDERS ON THE MARCH

**New Zealand's declaration of war on September 3, 1939, was followed by an immediate rush of volunteers. Below, some of New Zealand's Special Force are seen on the march through Wellington. "Where Britain goes, we go," stated the New Zealand Premier in a broadcast message to the people.**

*Photo, Sport & General*





**CANADA'S PARLIAMENT IN SPECIAL WAR SESSION**

**Following Britain's entry into the war, a special session of the Canadian Parliament was convened for September 7, 1939, to decide Canada's policy. Above, Lord Tweedsmuir, the Governor-General of Canada, is seen reading the speech from the Throne in the Senate Chamber of Parliament at Ottawa.**

*Photo, Planet News*

Australian Prime Minister, was assured by Mr. John Curtin, Leader of the Australian Federal Labour Party, that "the Australian Labour Party can be relied upon to do the right thing for the defence of Australia and the integrity of the British Commonwealth of Nations."

Conservatives and Liberals in Canada were at one. The prompt calling of the Canadian Parliament by Mr. Mackenzie King was not needed to demonstrate Canada's attitude and the conviction expressed by Mr. King that "there is no man, woman or child whose life is not bound up with this struggle." The delay until September 10 of Canada's declaration of war was partly to gain time for the assembly of Parliament and also to put the final touches to various emergency measures which it had to approve. A side-issue that also weighed with the politicians was the apathetic attitude of the French-Canadian Quebec people, an apathy that was soon undermined by Nazi atrocities in the opening stages of the war.

**Canada Speaks**

A more definite division occurred in South Africa, and German hopes of South African neutrality might have been realized but for the very bad impression created by Nazi policy and actions. General Hertzog, the Prime Minister and representative of the anti-British Dutch elements, actually intended to declare South Africa's neutrality. He was overruled by the Cabinet supporters of General Smuts. This far-sighted statesman dramatically opposed his chief at the last moment in order to maintain South Africa's status within the Commonwealth. All the indications of public opinion, even in South-West Africa, where a strong German element had turned at last against the Nazi policy, showed that General Smuts, when he succeeded General Hertzog as Prime Minister, had the support of the Dominion. Typical of the views expressed in the Press during the quarrelling of the politicians was the assertion of the Cape Town "Independent": "By proclaiming an attitude of neutrality we shall be defying the elementary fact that the liberty of South Africa is dependent upon the liberty of England."

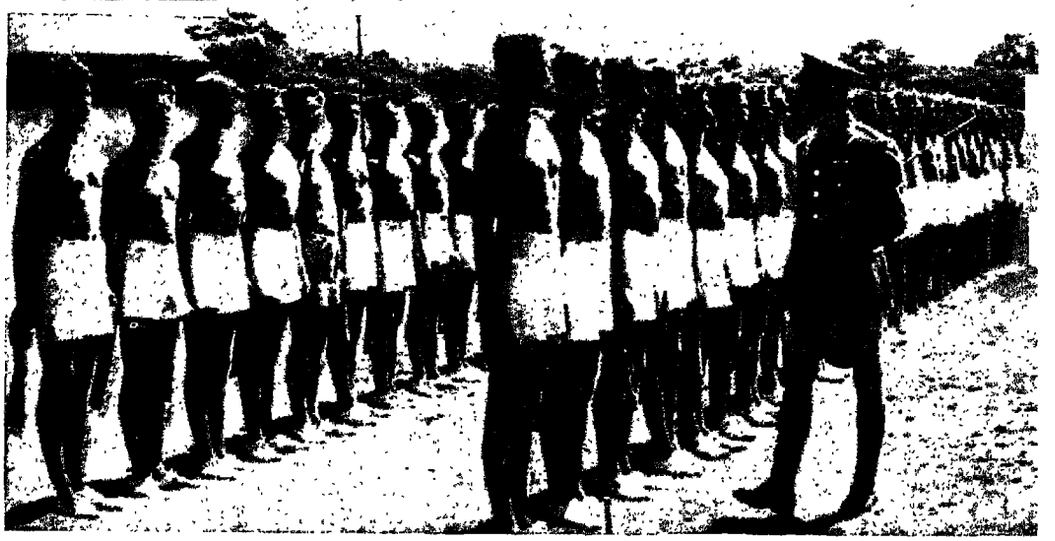
In India, while using the opportunity for voicing the demand for independence, both Mr. Gandhi and the Congress Committee denounced Nazi aggression, and Mr. Gandhi acknowledged the moral strength of Britain. Some 220 Indian Princes during the first three weeks of the war declared their loyalty to the King-Emperor, many of them with tangible offers of help; and the Moslem leaders (representing more than 75,000,000 Moslems in India), while espousing the Allied cause from the first, denounced the subsequent repudiation of that cause by Congress, which in October was disappointed by the decision of the Viceroy to postpone until after the conclusion of the war further measures towards giving Dominion status to India.

**Indian Problems**

The Government's position was indeed difficult, for while the majority of the 6,000,000 members of the All-India Congress Party were Hindus, the Moslems and other important minorities were represented in this membership. While the extreme demands of Congress for complete independence were recognized to be quite impracticable, and repudiated by the bulk of native opinion in India, "Left-wing" pro-Congress opinion in Britain was represented by some voices in the British Parliament's debate on India on October 19. Some adverse criticism was occasioned by the delay in constitutional reform announced by the Viceroy, and a hint made by Sir Samuel Hoare that coercion might be the necessary reply to the resignation of Congress Provincial Ministries and the policy of non-co-operation decided on by Congress; this found subsequent echoes in the non-Conservative newspapers. The principal







## THE EMPIRE ANSWERS THE CALL OF FREEDOM

Above, thousands of gas masks in the making at a factory in Melbourne, Australia. Top right, a machine-gun section of the Malacca Volunteer Corps training on the shores of the Straits Settlements. Right, South African troops being inspected during their training. Below, an armed police guard on duty at a river bridge in Northern India.

*Photos, Fox; Sport & General; F. G. H. Kerr; Wide World*









**LOYAL PRINCES OF INDIAN STATES**

Above left, Lieut.-Col. H.H. Maharajah Shri Sir Digvijaysinhji, Maharajah Jam Sahib of Nawanagar. Above right, H.H. Maharajah Shri Sir Bala Rama Varma, ruler of Travancore. Centre Lieut.-Gen. H.E.H. Sir Mir Usman Ali Khan, Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar. Below left, Maj.-Gen. H.H. Maharajadhirajah Maharajah Shri Harisinghi Bahadur, Maharajah of Jammu and Kashmir. Below right, Gen. H.H. Maharajadhirajah Shri Sir Ganga Singhji Bahadur, ruler of Bikanir.

*Photos, E.N.A., Topical, Dorien Leigh; Vandyk*





arguments against the India Government's attitude were that Britain claimed to be fighting for the cause of democratic freedom, and also that a dissatisfied India could be, in Mr. Vernon Bartlett's words in the "News Chronicle," "an infernal nuisance."

Such arguments as these, typical of the English intelligentsia, were not so much superficial as ill-informed. The Government of India had to consider first how to maintain India's defence and helpfulness to the common cause during the war. Although the well-meaning critics at home seemed not to know this, the populations whose co-operation was most important, and whose total numbers represented a majority in India, were not interested in self-government, and the majority of their leaders were strongly opposed to Congress policy. Since unity was of the first importance to India, attempts to continue discussions of reforms that might meet Congress ideas half-way could only interfere with concentration on problems arising out of the war, and check the co-operation of the loyal sections that were antagonistic to Congress. These powerful minorities, as we shall see when examining the military potentiality of India, contained the soldiers of India. While the dissidence of Congress must therefore not be ignored, India as a whole was overwhelmingly in favour of British war policy.

**Importance of Minorities**

What all the declarations of loyalty from the various parts of the Empire meant in terms of practical assistance may be indicated by briefly describing some of their principal consequences. In the aggregate they signified a far greater potential accession to Britain's strength in war than they did in 1914. Before examining details, however, the panoramic picture must be thought of as more varied even than so far has been indicated. It is necessary to refer to the diversity of peoples and of geographical situations belonging to the lands that combined so dramatically against the invaders of Poland.

India's important neighbour, Burma, for instance, in passing a Senate resolution of support, was unanimous, and one of the speakers declared that

"the absolute lack of selfish interests on the part of Great Britain in this crisis and her constant and persistent endeavour to appeal to reason and discussion can mean only one thing: she is staking her all for the ideals of humanity, justice and freedom. In this attitude Burma is absolutely one with her."

In Ceylon the Sinhalese were wholeheartedly with the British behind the State Council's resolution of loyalty,

and in taking practical steps for defence immediately upon the declaration of war. In Singapore, when the B.B.C. news of the expiration of the British ultimatum was announced, it was 5.20 p.m. on that fateful Sunday. A quarter of an hour later came the broadcast speech of Mr. Chamberlain announcing war. The news swept through Chinatown and the Indian and Malay districts, and soon was being telephoned and telegraphed all over Malaya. The Europeans and native labourers on plantations and in tin mines picked it up in the most unlikely spots. The Governor of Singapore was attending a seafarers' service in the Cathedral at the time, and the news was quickly announced from the pulpit there and in all the other churches.

The same excitement and enthusiasm were shown far eastward—in Borneo, and in Hong Kong, already advanced in warlike measures owing to local tension due to the Japanese invasion of China. Fiji and groups of other loyal islands far away in the Pacific joined in the chorus. As a picturesque example, the 32,000 people of Tonga, that romantic coral island, spoke through their matriarchal Queen, offering the island's resources. From the big and small islands of the West Indies, and the other islands and continental territories of Central and South America owning British allegiance, came the same prompt statements of loyalty, emergency measures, and offers.

In Africa—going north from Natal—Basutoland, Bechuanaland, and Swaziland joined up with Rhodesia and Kenya. Two-thirds of the man-power of Rhodesia at once volunteered for service, and all the paramount chiefs of native tribes asked how they could serve. In Kenya, defensive measures included the prompt but humane internment of the big proportion of German settlers. The natives of the Gold Coast, already familiar with Hitler's scorn for negroes, expressed their sentiments through the paramount chief of Accra, who was reported as saying: "If the worst comes to the worst, I will take off my sandals and walk barefoot with the British soldiers right into the firing line"—a pleasantly naïve and genuine statement that served its purpose quite as well as the parliamentary language of the democratic Dominions.

**British Africa United**

Messages of loyalty came also from the Sultan of Zanzibar, the Kabaka of Uganda, and the Imam of Oman (Muscat), which was in treaty relations with the Government of India, as was Bahrein, which had been so



**PRO-BRITISH POTENTATES OF AFRICA AND THE EAST**

Top left, H.H. Sheik Sir Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa, Ruling Sheik of the State of Bahrein. Top right, H.H. the Emir Abdullah Ibn Hussein of Transjordan. Lower left, Saiyid Sir Khalifa bin Harub, Sultan of Zanzibar. Lower right, H.H. Sir Saiyid Said bin Taimur, Imam of Oman. From all these rulers came messages of goodwill on the occasion of Britain's declaration of war.

*Photos, Central Press; Keystone*

connected with the British Empire since 1820

This small State of Bahrein is an interesting illustration of the ramifications of the Empire It consists of a group of islands near the Arabian coast, in the Persian Gulf, of which the largest bears the same name as the State. From Manama, the capital, where reside an English financial adviser and a political agent, came a declaration by the ruler, H.H. Sheik Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa Bahrein provided a stage in the Oriental route of Imperial Airways, and it has some petroleum wells and large pearl fisheries. Its position in the Persian Gulf was of strategic importance.

**The Smallest says 'Aye'**

As disappointing to the Nazi Government as South Africa's abandonment of neutrality was the action of other countries not integral parts of the Empire. Some of these were strategically significant. Especially important was the offer of support from the Emir of Transjordan on September 5, followed in a few days by similar responses from the leaders of the Arabs and the Jews in Palestine. Coupled with the successful conclusion in October of the pact with Turkey, the attitude of these countries made secure the vast British controlled oil supplies from Iran.

"Now we have spanned the earth, and have listened to the voices of statesmen and citizens in many lands that make up the British Commonwealth," said Mr. Anthony Eden, in a broadcast address on October 6. The Dominions Secretary included the whole Empire in his survey as he continued.

"We have heard the response of a great Empire to a great cause. . . . We all share a determination that the rule of violence must cease. . . . To achieve this, we of the British Empire are prepared to devote the whole of our strength. Sacrifices will be demanded of us. We are resolved in calmness and with fortitude to make them. Dark days may lie ahead But the rich and manifold resources of this Commonwealth of free peoples are being gathered powerfully and swiftly together for a cause to which we have dedicated ourselves."





**AUSTRALIA READY TO MARCH**

From the very outbreak of war the Commonwealth of Australia applied herself intensively to the training and equipment of her army; the Sixth Division, a special force of 20,000 men, was earmarked for service abroad if necessary. The portrait is of the division's commander, Lieut.-Gen. Sir Thomas Blamey, D.S.O., who was on the General Staff of the Australian Corps in 1918 Above are men of the Victorian Scottish Regiment, leaving Melbourne for camp on Sept. 19, 1939.

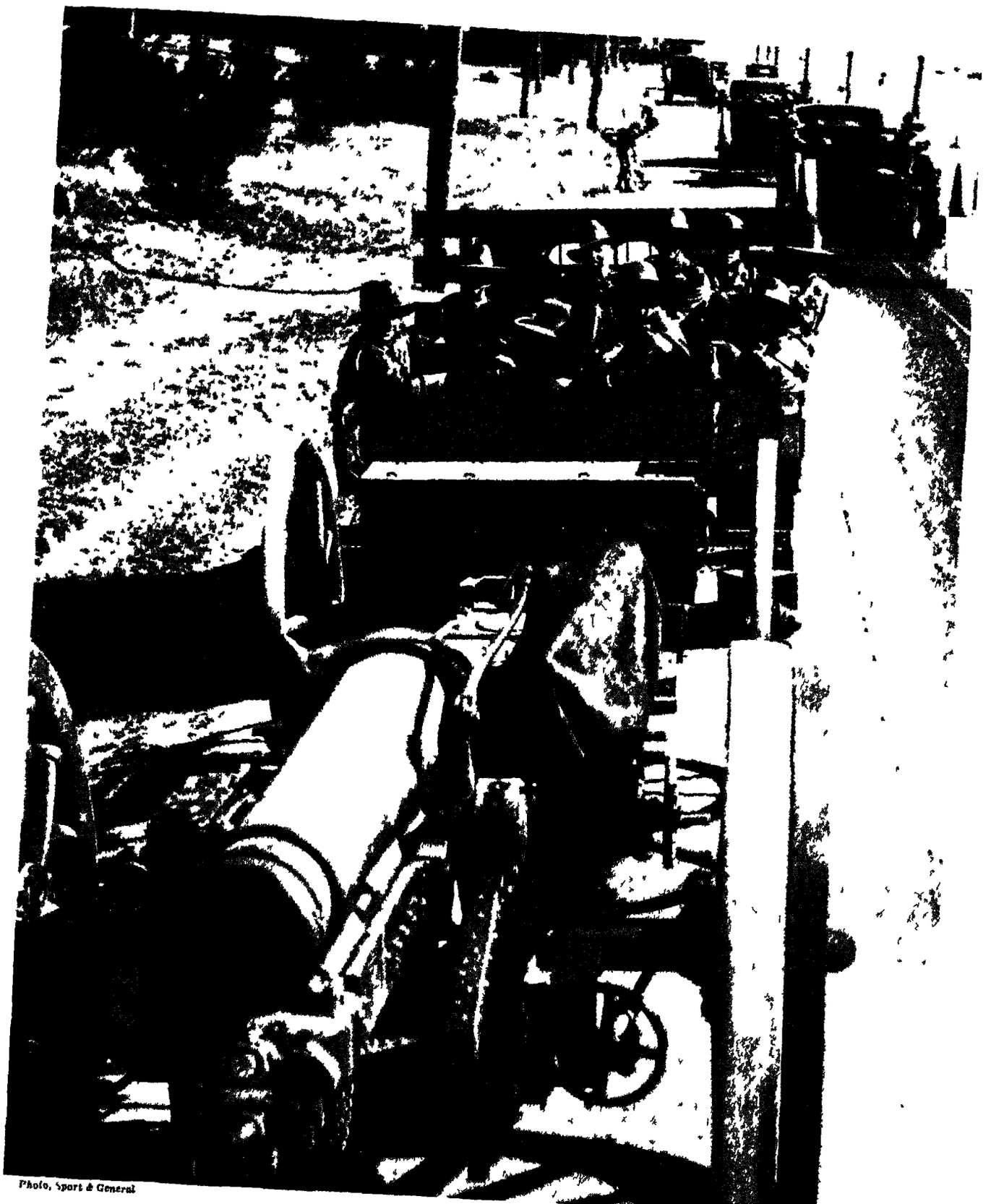
*Photos, Australian Official, Central Press*

Not more than a small proportion of the Empire's great reserves of manpower were required or likely to be called upon for any military purposes, but it was soon realized that the increased manufacturing resources of the Dominions and their quotas of the best types of volunteers provided a most valuable accretion of striking power. This was especially true of air power, and all through September and October plans for contributing personnel and equipment to the Royal Air Force took precedence over purely military contributions, for it had been decided that strength in mechanized land forces and superiority in the air would be the primary requisites of victory so long as naval power kept command of the seas.

In the working out of this problem of air power Canada, by reason of her situation and resources, stood at the head of the Dominions and Colonies. Some months before the outbreak of the war it had been realized that heavy military aircraft could be flown safely across the Atlantic, so making of Canada a safe air force base and a convenient centre for training extra personnel. Not only was Canada within easy communication by sea and air with Europe, but she also was centrally situated in respect of the Empire as a whole, for air reinforcements could be dispatched more conveniently to many parts of the Empire from North America than they could from Britain during a European war.

**Canada the Empire's Aerodrome**

A bold and striking scheme to use Canada as an Empire centre for the advanced training of the young volunteer pilots, observers and gunners of the Royal Air Force was described in Parliament by Sir Kingsley Wood on October 10. Lord Riverdale, at the head of a technical mission from the United Kingdom, had already left for Canada, to meet there similar missions from Australia and New Zealand. The Dominions, including South Africa, had agreed in September to a different scheme of decentralized production of aircraft, equipment and personnel in each Dominion, and the Canadian clearing-house scheme was in effect a means of unifying methods and ensuring, especially in training, a common standard of high efficiency. Personnel, explained Sir Kingsley, would go from the elementary training schools of Australia and New Zealand, and so would many from the R.A.F. schools in Britain. The Dominion trainees would ultimately join either Dominion or United Kingdom units. "Our object is to achieve by co-operative effort air forces of overwhelming strength," he stated "This



Photo, Sport & General

THE COMMONWEALTH 'READY TO SEE IT THROUGH'

"We stand with Britain," said Mr. R. G. Menzies, Premier of the Commonwealth of Australia, in a declaration made on Sept 2, 1939, and in his broadcast message the following day added: "Australia is ready to see it through." Of the quality of Australia's fighting forces the war of 1914–18 bears eloquent testimony, and her economic resources are invaluable to the Allied cause. Above, members of an artillery brigade of the Australian Militia on the

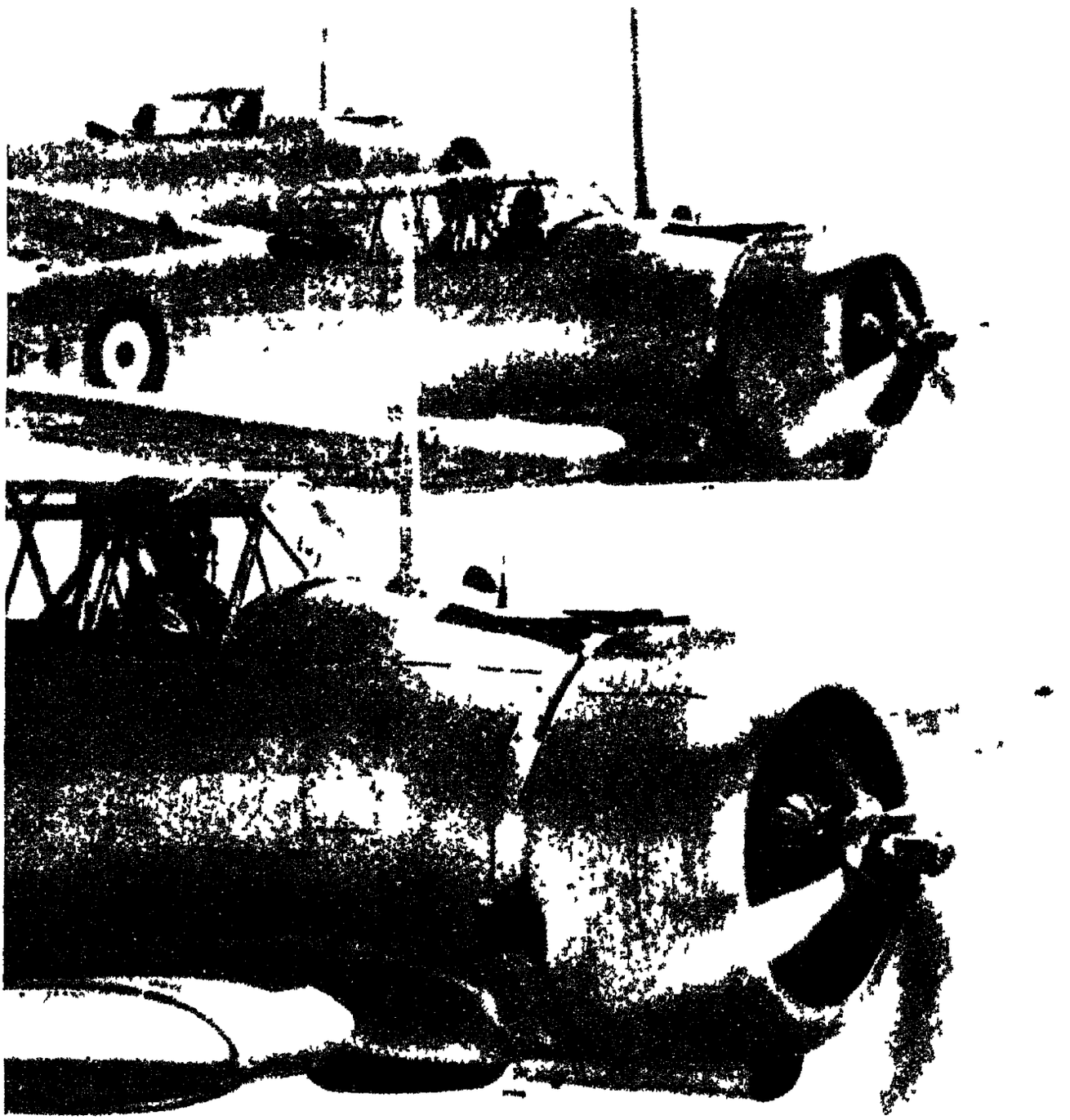
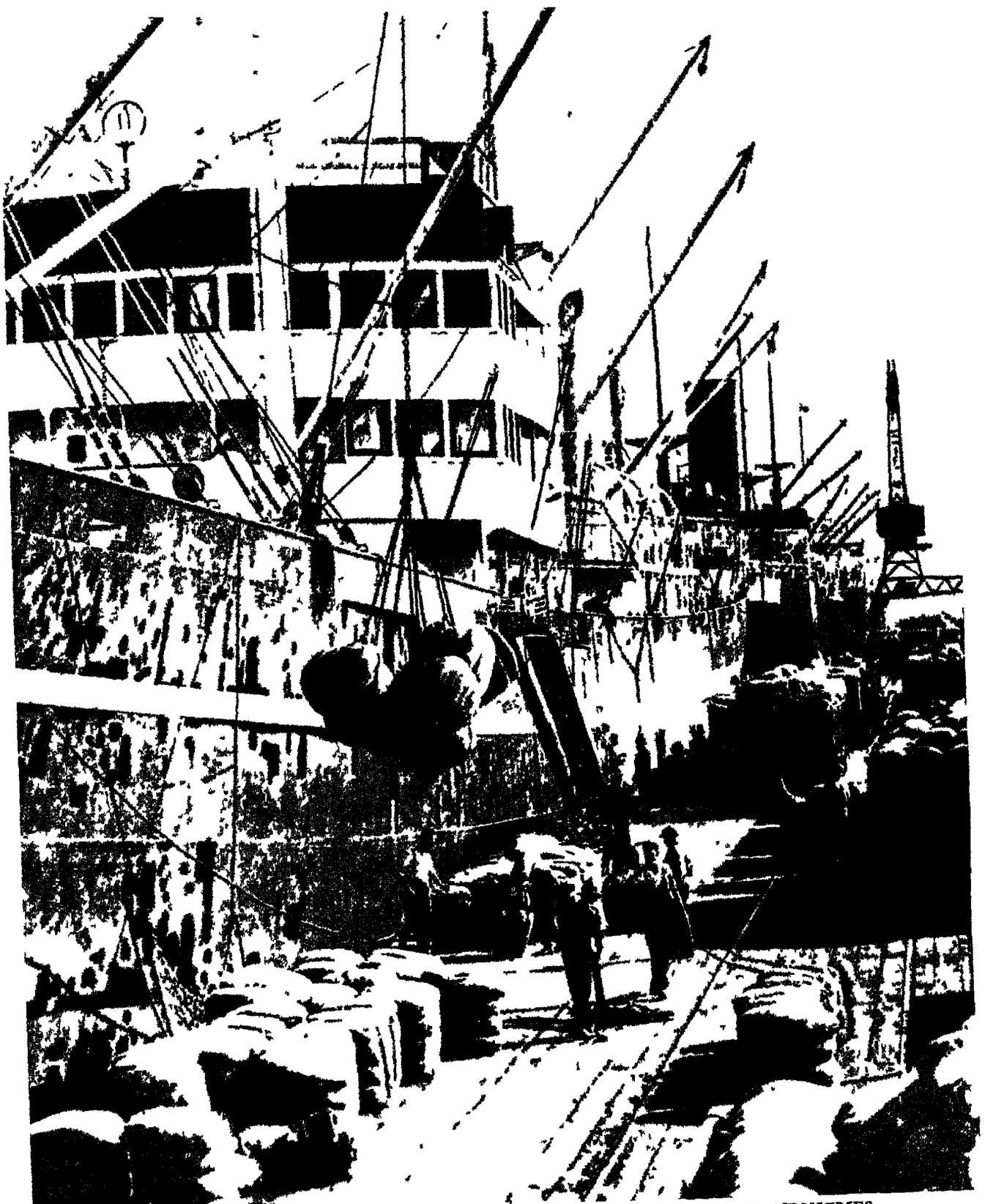


*Photo Associated I*

## AUSTRALIA'S EVER EXPANDING AIR FORCE

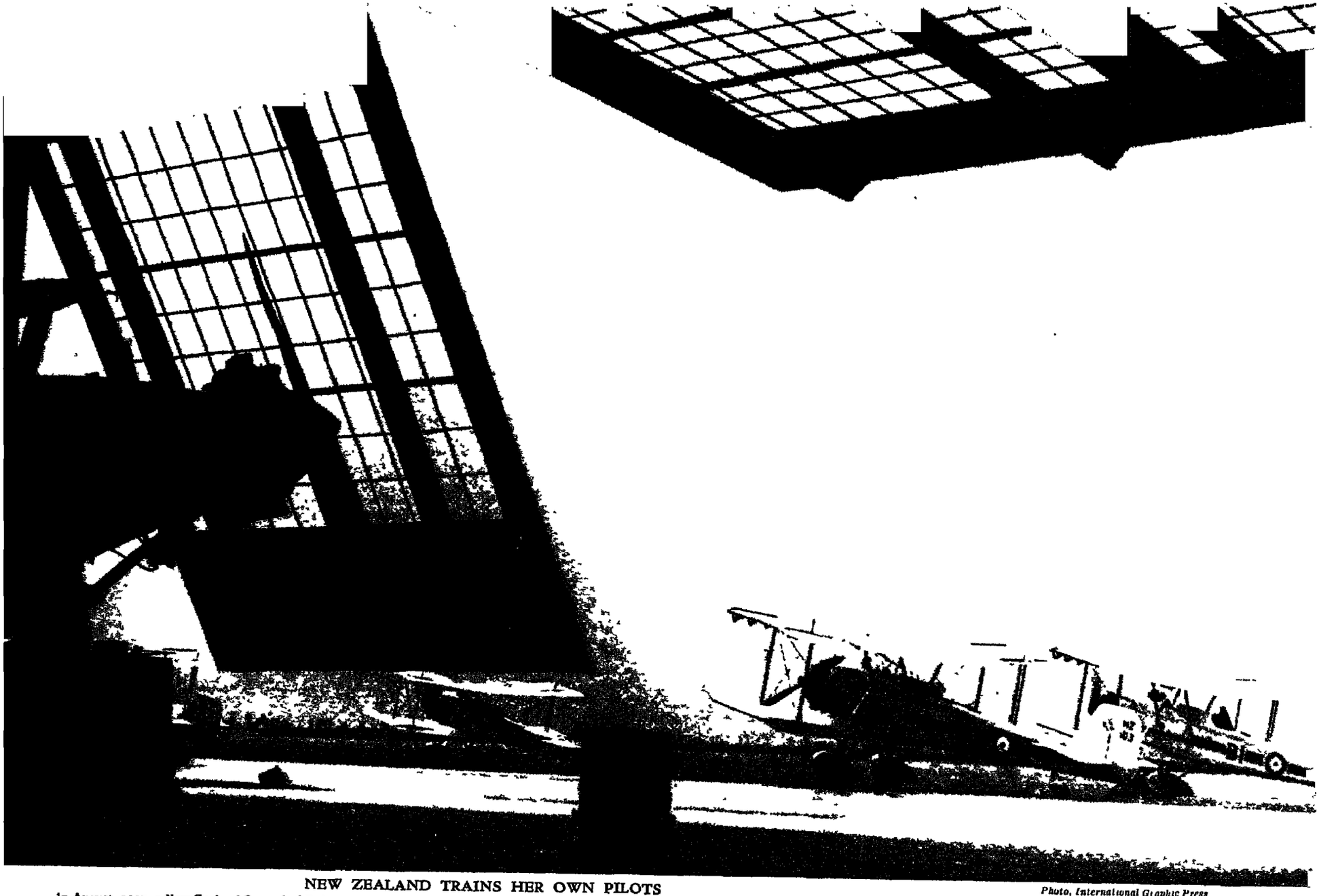
Here is seen a formation of Australian-made Wirraway 'planes of the Royal Australian Air Force on a training flight They are two-seater general-purposes craft and are an adaptation of an American make, built under licence by the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation Sufficient machines to equip a squadron are built every week To cope with the expansion of the R.A A F, the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation went into production about the middle of 1938



RAW MATERIALS FOR THE MOTHERLAND'S WAR INDUSTRIES

Some idea of the economic advantages we reap from the cordial relations which exist between us and our Dominions overseas is shown by the fact that the Commonwealth of Australia sends some two-thirds of her exports to the United Kingdom For the year 1937-38 they amounted to £86,000,000 out of a total of £126 000,000. Wool is the principal commodity exported The bales of wool seen here are being loaded at Victoria Docks, Melbourne

*Photo, Planet News*



## NEW ZEALAND TRAINS HER OWN PILOTS

*Photo, International Graphic Press*

In August, 1937, a New Zealand Council of Defence was set up to co-ordinate the work of Army, Navy and Air Force Since then many improvements have been carried out, including an expansion of the New Zealand Air Force. A number of new aerodromes were built throughout the Dominion and advantage was taken of the latest developments in aircraft design. Above is a view from a hangar on a New Zealand aerodrome, showing Vickers " Vildebeest " aircraft used for bombing training.

arrangement illustrates how free and equal members of the British Commonwealth can bring the full weight and might of their individual resources to achieve success in a common cause."

Considering that the Royal Air Force at the end of the first Great War was enrolling pupils for training as pilots at the rate of 3,000 a month, the prospects of the far greater Empire co-operation of 1939 of achieving "air forces of overwhelming strength" promised to be quickly realized. Moreover, contributions of machines and trained personnel were among the first offers of the Dominions, although South Africa and subsequently Australia decided to reserve their strength for effective home defence as the best means of contributing to the general security. On October 31 the Commonwealth Prime Minister, after a Cabinet meeting, announced the revision of Australia's original offer to send six squadrons to France. These squadrons would remain in Australia. The change of plan was related to a large-scale Australian participation in the Empire Air Force centred in Canada. This new policy, adopted after consultation with Britain, was in reality a triumph for the idea of the Empire pool of air power. Nine Sunderland flying-boats previously ordered by Australia were to remain at Britain's disposal, for which purpose 17 officers and 166 airmen were to be sent to Britain



**NEW ZEALANDERS JOIN UP IN BRITAIN**

**On the outbreak of war many New Zealanders living in Britain registered for war service. Some were enrolled as a New Zealand anti-tank unit. They at once went into training, so as to be ready to be merged later with the N.Z. Expeditionary Force when the time should come. One of them is seen above sighting an anti-tank gun.**

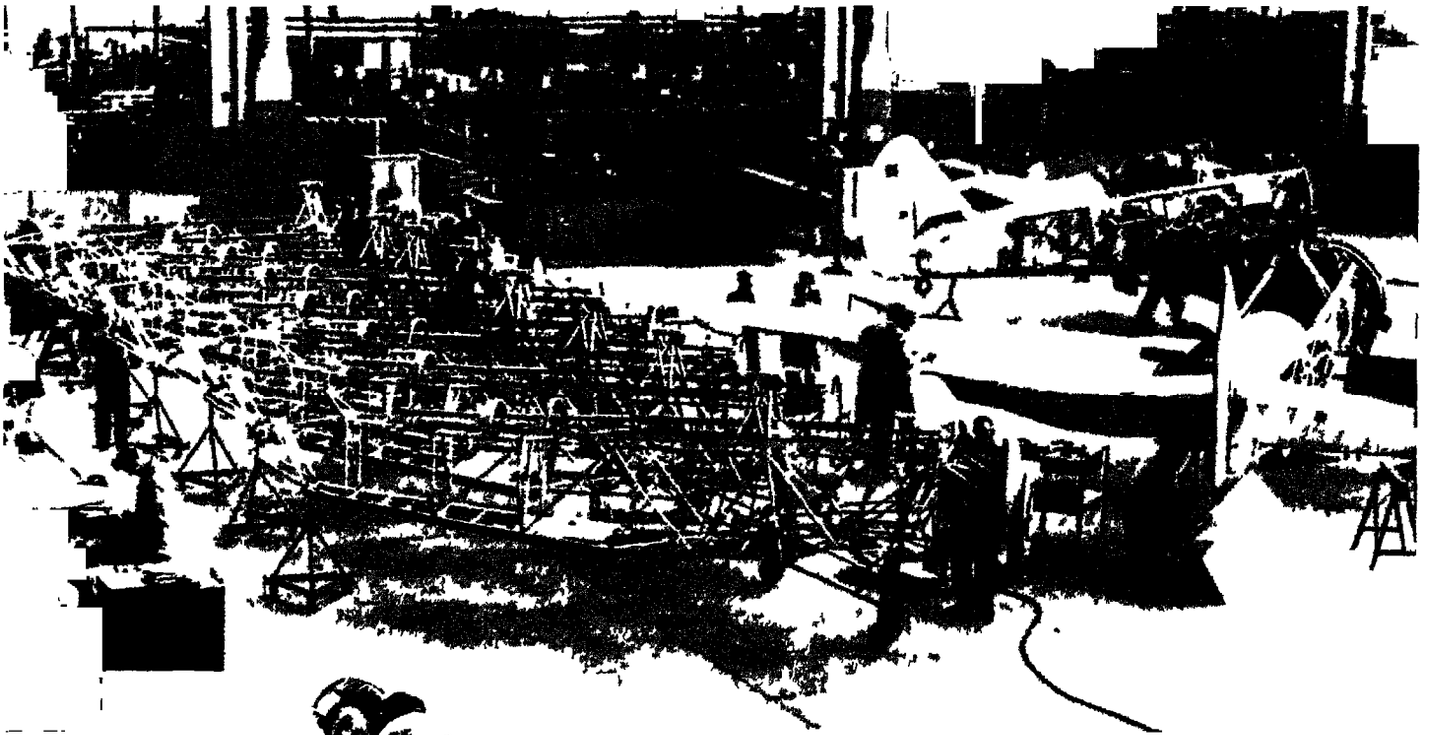
*Photo, Topical Press*

**Pilots from the Empire**

The R.A.F. personnel at the outbreak of war already included large numbers of young men from the Dominions. From New Zealand alone in September there were four hundred, either serving as pilots or completing training in the United Kingdom, and the New Zealand Air Force itself was well prepared for home defence. Canada was stated to have at least 1,000 airmen already in the Royal Air Force, and Canadians were among the gallant crews of the bombers which raided the approaches of the Kiel Canal and damaged at least one battleship. As in Australia, flying for civil purposes had greatly developed since the previous war, owing to the growing necessity for transport between distant centres and sometimes lonely outposts of trade and industry. The aircraft industry in Canada was exceptionally well placed for expansion, both on account of Canada's plentiful supplies of raw materials and her nearness to the United States. Besides being a useful business intermediary between Britain and the U.S.A. in the purchase of American machines and other supplies, Canada promised to make important contributions through her industries. Less decisive perhaps, but involving a far wider voluntary effort among the populations concerned, were the offers of military contributions. Only a small proportion of these could be accepted for prospective employment in Europe, and practically all such were from the Dominions. By the beginning of October a first draft of 40,000 militia for a wartime army had gone into camp training in Australia, and this was to be followed by a second draft of 40,000 in November. The Sixth Division, a special force of 20,000, commanded by Lieut.-General Sir Thomas Blamey, was enlisted for service at home or abroad. Counting auxiliary units also, Australia planned to have 200,000 well trained and equipped soldiers before the summer of 1940.

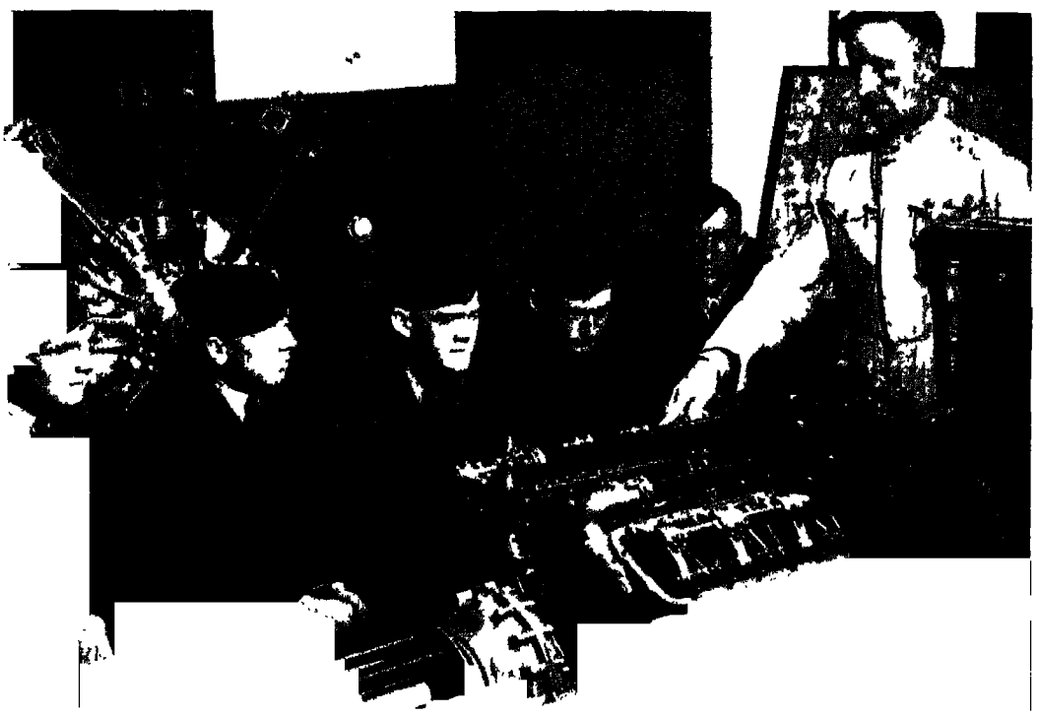
Many of the new militia had usefully been relieved of garrison duties in the first few weeks of the war by volunteers who had served in the Australian Imperial Force of 1914–18. These developments involved the extension of camp accommodation and a speeding up of the expansion (previously decided upon) of the governmental munitions output, as well as the construction of certain aircraft for which key-men had been training in United Kingdom aircraft factories since 1938. Naturally these developments, important though they were to Australian security, did not so directly bear upon the European conflict as Canada's activities in the same directions, but a noteworthy side-issue, concerning the vitally necessary supply of petrol, was an intensified study of Australian resources. The shale deposits of Newnes, New South Wales, were expected to produce some 10,000,000 gallons of shale petrol within the first twelve months of the war, and to increase this rate of production gradually to 20,000,000 gallons annually. Including benzol and power alcohol, the Commonwealth production of motor fuels was expected to amount to some 35,000,000 gallons in a year, a useful contribution towards her own needs.

Great as was New Zealand's military contribution to British forces in the war of 1914–18, in proportion to her population—she had sent overseas one-half of her male population of military age—in September 1939 she showed an equal willingness and a far greater equipment and organization. Although the need for any expeditionary force to Europe was plainly doubtful from the beginning of the war, the New Zealand spirit was reflected in the enrolment in London during the first three weeks of some 600 New Zealanders, who registered for war service with the High Commissioner. A New Zealand unit was formed in England from New Zealand residents or visitors between 21 and 23, and they went into camp [illegible] a New Zealand Staff When trained









## HOW THE EMPIRE'S AIR STRENGTH GREW

Britain's Dominions played an increasingly important part in the air effort of the Empire in the early months of the war At the top of the page is a scene in a Melbourne factory, with Wirraway aircraft—an adaptation of an American design—in rapid production Above left, a Canadian pilot and his observer, seen climbing aboard their machine during training, typify the youthful ardour of the modern Royal Canadian Air Force Above right is the McGregor single-seater fighter, designed and built in Canada On the left, young airmen of the Royal Australian Air Force are being instructed in the working of an aero engine

*Photos, Planet News, Fox, Sport & General International Graphic Press*

to the New Zealand main forces It was evident before the end of October 1939 that the military contingents of Australia and New Zealand, should they be called up, would be able to contribute strong forces to the war in Europe by the late spring of 1940.

As for Canada, besides doubling the naval personnel and expanding the air force, the Canadian Cabinet decided to raise an expeditionary force of 20,000 men, which should be ready to go overseas by February, 1940 The original cause of that Cabinet meeting was the news of the Soviet intervention in Poland When the war started, Canada's armed forces (military, naval, and air) totalled about 55,000, and recruiting of volunteers had more than doubled this number by the middle of October Mr Norman Rogers, the former Minister of Labour, as the new Defence Minister, had then gained warm approval of all parties Considerable though the combatant services of Canada were these were much overshadowed in importance by economic resources made available for the conduct of the war The first two months of hostilities brought about no development to alter the prospect that the Empire's military man-power would be a valuable reserve, unlikely to be extensively employed in Europe

**Canada's Contribution**

This aspect of the willing and prepared, or rapidly preparing, military forces overseas was especially prominent in the consideration of India's offers, as well as of the small ally of Britain and France, Nepal—the home of the Gurkhas—which entered the war within the first fortnight Under its able Prime Minister, Sir Joodha Shumsher Jung, Nepal's real prospective value as an ally—and that was great—was her position on the frontiers of India and the possibility of reinforcement by Gurkha contingents of India's garrison forces In India itself the political division between Congress and the Government and native States, which in a broadcast speech on November 5 Lord Linlithgow confessed he had been unable to compose, made actually little difference to the potential military contribution of the Indian Empire

Sir Michael O'Dwyer, in a letter to the Press, pointed out that the Government's declaration of war had been warmly welcomed by all the great minorities of India who were outside the Congress Party, four out of these five minorities had furnished 80 per cent of the 680,000 combatants raised by India in the first Great War—viz Moslems 238,000, Sikhs 90,000, Rajputs 96 000, Mahrattas 26,000, and other Hindus 96,000 Only a negligible proportion of these fighting classes was likely to be influenced by a continuation of the Congress Party's non co operation The minorities mentioned accounted together for about two thirds of India's population and a much higher proportion of the most vigorous elements

India's potential military contribution in 1939, however, was far greater than in 1914 because of the modernized territorial battalions and cadet corps bigger supplies of equipment, and an altogether incomparably greater effectiveness in manufacturing many necessities for the conduct of war Indeed, within the preceding quarter century, India had become one of the six greatest manufacturing countries in the world, which fact again shifts the emphasis away from the Empire's combative power to that of economic resourcefulness

**India's Potentialities**

The first two months of the war led to the conclusion—and with small prospect of that conclusion having to be modified—that the most telling contribution of the Empire in the war would be economic In the economic field, moreover, progress had been most impressive since 1914 A graphic illustration of the general situation in this

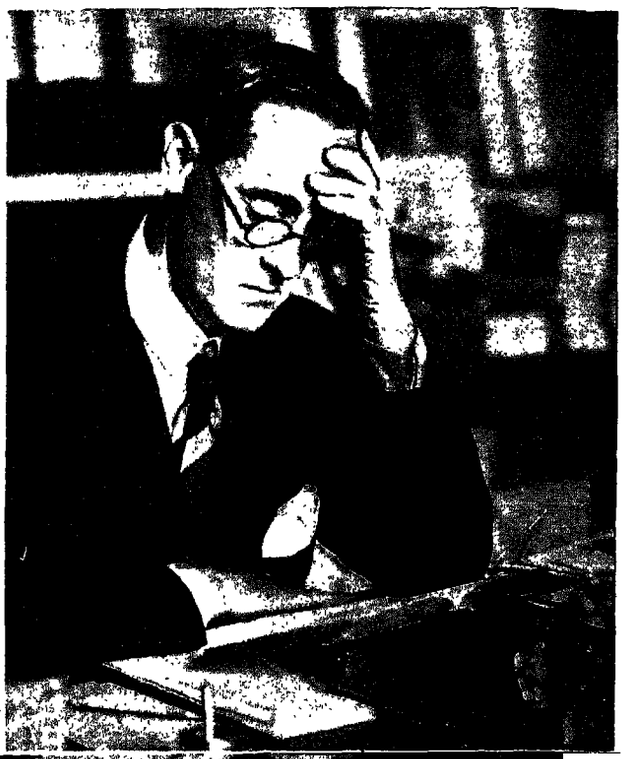
**THE CALL IS HEARD 5,000 MILES AWAY**

**Canadian troops, part of the first contingent to leave British Columbia for duty overseas, are here seen at Vancouver boarding a train bearing a banner warning a worried-looking Hitler what is in store for him when they arrive in Europe**

*Photo Planet News*









## INDIA COMES INTO THE WAR

As soon as it was known that Britain had declared war upon Nazi Germany, all German males in Bombay were rounded up and taken, as seen in the bottom photograph, to the Cowasjee Jehangir Hall, Bombay, prior to being sent to concentration camps. The top photographs show, left, Mahatma Gandhi, who acknowledged the rectitude of Britain's attitude in opposing Nazism; and, right, the Marquess of Linlithgow, Viceroy of India.

*Photos, Central Press ; Keystone*

respect is afforded by the growth of Canadian wealth, since Canada from the start of the war promised to be the most important individual unit of the Empire in the struggle against Germany.

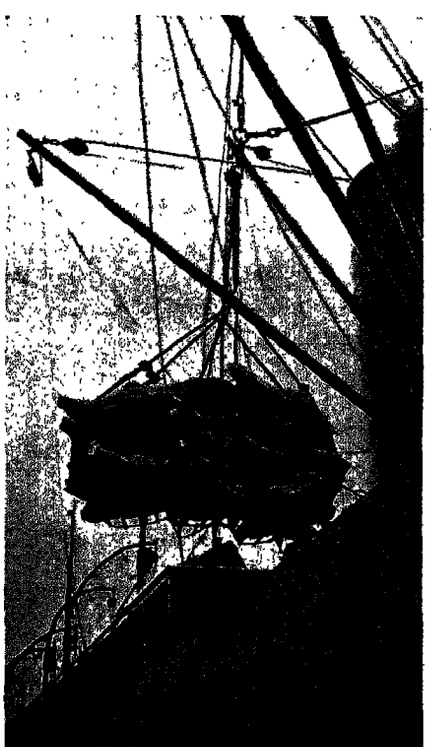
The following list of figures compiled by Mr. Floyd Chalmers, Editor of the Canadian "Financial Post," appeared in the "Sunday Times" (Nov. 5, 1939).

| | 1914 | 1938 |
|---|---|---|
| Steel, tons .. | 744,000 | 1,150,000 |
| Bacon, cwts. exported | 239,000 | 1,025,000 |
| Nickel, pounds | 45,000,000 | 211,000,000 |
| Copper, pounds | 76,000,000 | 586,000,000 |
| Lead, pounds | 36,000,000 | 419,000,000 |
| Petroleum, bls. | 215,000 | 7,000,000 |
| Gold, oz. .. | 770,000 | 4,700,000 |
| Newsprint, tons | 935,000 | 4,715,000 |
| Electric power (installed h.p.) | 1,950,000 | 8,200,000 |
| Wheat, acres | 10,300,000 | 26,000,000 |
| Industry, capital invested .. | £350,000,000 | £800,000,000 |
| Bank deposits | £226,000,000 | £540,000,000 |
| Life insurance | £280,000,000 | £1,500,000,000 |
| Exports .. | £108,000,000 | £242,000,000 |

Although still little more than that of Greater London, Canada's population of ten and a half millions in 1939 had risen from under eight millions in 1914. Considering that the Dominion's industrial power had so greatly increased, the prospects of a very rapid development of her munitions industries during the war were assured by recalling that from 1914 to 1917 Canada's output of munitions rose from £6,000 to about £100,000,000, and that during the whole of the first Great War she produced munitions worth more than £250,000,000 at the exchange rates holding in the autumn of 1939.

An interesting development of her economic co-operation accompanied the repeal of the United States embargo on war supplies to belligerents. The "cash and carry" provisions of the American neutrality law prevented Americans giving credit to the Allied purchasers of her war supplies, as well as prohibiting their transport in United States vessels. By placing Canadian dollars at the disposal of Britain, Canada was ready to help in balancing up the exchange between the two countries, if Britain's exports during the war should fall off while her imports from Canada increased. This involved, before the end of October, the calling of £20,000,000 of Canada's sterling stock for redemption. Britain's stocks of earmarked gold and foreign exchange balances in Canada had to be preserved as much as possible to finance purchases from the United States. It had become probable also that when Sir John Simon should reveal the British Government's plans for mobilizing foreign investments privately held in the United Kingdom, a ready market in Canada for the Canadian issues would enable Canadian investors to supply the British Government with large credit balances. The Bank of Canada agreed to do the marketing of such Canadian securities, £615,000,000 worth of which were held in Great Britain.

In the purely economic field, all the Dominions and Colonies were similarly mobilizing their resources for the purpose of making the most effective contributions to victory, and what all this world-wide co-operative and unforced recruitment of resources meant was difficult for the unassuming British citizen at home to grasp. The full implications of the Empire being at war only reached their maximum scope and startling immensity with this intensified organization of natural resources. Covering nearly 14,000,000 square miles, with populations totalling nearly 500,000,000, of whom some 48,000,000 only were in Europe, the combined resources of this loosely but firmly knit group of countries were prodigious, with highly industrialized and financially powerful Britain as the nucleus. And command of the sea, coupled with effective air defences, demonstrated in the first few weeks of the war that these resources would remain available to the Allies.



**RATIONS FROM OVERSEAS**

**With the Allied navies retaining the command of the seas, Britain had no need to fear a shortage of meat, especially as much of it came from her Dominions. Above is a cargo of beef from Australia being unloaded at a British port.**

*Photo, Central Press*

Only the greatest and most important resources can be mentioned, but they include the enormous supplies of cereals from Canada and Australia, the sugar and tea of India, the wool and mutton of Australia and New Zealand, and the dairy produce of these Dominions and of Canada. Mineral resources, without which modern war cannot be sustained by any Power, provided even more impressive facts, for not only were practically all the chief minerals largely produced within the Empire, but in many cases the Empire production was a big proportion of the world production.

**Empire's Gold Holdings**

One of the most important factors of economic strategy is gold. By far the greatest national stocks of gold were held by the United States when the war started, followed a long way after by France, and then by Britain, which held about £500,000,000. Right at the bottom of the list of gold-holding Powers were Italy, Japan, and Germany, in which contrast may be seen a reliable indication of the connexion between national politics and economics. But though these stocks of gold held by the various governments were important factors of purchasing power, the gold situation in September, 1939, is not fully depicted by comparing them; it must be remembered that at least 55 per cent of the world's total supplies of gold were being mined within the Empire, South Africa being the largest individual producer. According to the statistics of the Imperial Institute, greatly increased production of other important minerals had occurred within the Empire since 1918. A large proportion of the world's supplies of iron ore, coal, sulphur, phosphates, mica, and bauxite came from the Empire. Nickel and asbestos supplies, like that of gold, exceeded the rest of the world's output. Mica, as well as such vital ores as tin, lead, copper, zinc and manganese, had an Empire output exceeding 25 per cent of the world's total output. Such was the scope of the natural resources controlled by the peoples of the Empire whom the Nazi regime brought into the war against a Germany hopelessly deficient in foodstuffs and minerals.

How to organize our resources most effectively, not where to obtain necessary supplies, was the chief preoccupation of the War Cabinet during the opening months of war. The need resulted in a new demonstration of Empire unity in the form of an Imperial conference which was an important step forward in the co-ordination of Empire's contributions.

Chapter 21

# THE BRITISH ARMY CROSSES TO FRANCE: 158,000 MEN SAFELY TRANSPORTED

*A Great Army Crosses the Channel in Secret—Comparison with the B.E.F. of 1914—Only Twenty per cent were Infantrymen—How the New Mechanized Force was Transported—March to the Front—Eye-witnesses' Stories of our Army in the War Zone—Twice in a Generation to Meet the Same Foe*

As in 1914, so in 1939 a great British army slipped across to France in the silent watches of the night. The secret of its assembly and of its departure, as of its safe arrival beyond the Channel, was well kept. The curious friend and the spying foe were alike baffled by the official black-out. Fleet Street knew something of what was afoot and suspected more, but not an embarrassing line saw the light of day in the columns of the newspapers; and at Westminster even the most voluble of legislators and the most ardent ferreter out of Government secrets kept a firm control on their loquacity and their inquisitorial itch. Thousands were acquainted with a part of the story—the men who marched to the docks and were convoyed across, the railwaymen who ran the special trains, the dockers and the crews of the troopships, the wives and sweethearts the departing soldiers left behind them. But none of these knew the whole tale, or endeavoured to discover and to reveal what those in authority wished to veil.

Only at the War Office the great men of the Army—the Secretary for War and his circle of responsible advisers—only there in Whitehall they planned and ordered, and then, when their plans were laid and the orders issued, sat often through the night in their official quarters, waiting for the message which should send them to their beds with a happy heart. Yet another convoy had left the English ports, had run the gauntlet of the Channel crossing—who knew what U-boats lay in wait beneath the inky surface?—and had arrived safely in France.

When the "Old Contemptibles" crossed the Channel twenty-five years before, the first news of their departure and arrival at the scene of war filtered through to the general public on August 17, when the vanguard was actually in touch with the German invaders in Belgium. In 1939 the official announcement of the British Field Force's arrival in France was released to the press on September 12, though it had been given out in the Paris news bulletin several nights before that British troops were actually in France. The story of the Army's formation and dispatch was contained in a speech by Mr. Leslie Hore-Belisha, the Secretary of State for War, in the House of Commons on October 11, when he was able to announce that an army of 158,000 men had been transported intact to France without a single casualty.

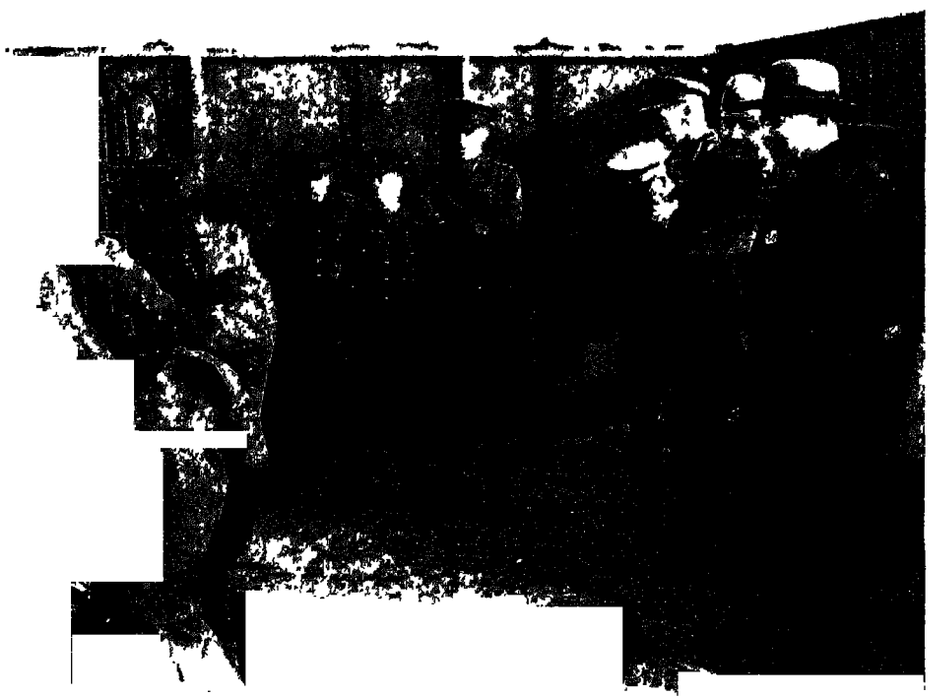
"I am able to inform the House," said Mr. Hore-Belisha, "that we have fulfilled—and more than fulfilled—our undertaking recently given to France to dispatch to that country in the event of war a British Expeditionary Force of a specified dimension within a specified time."

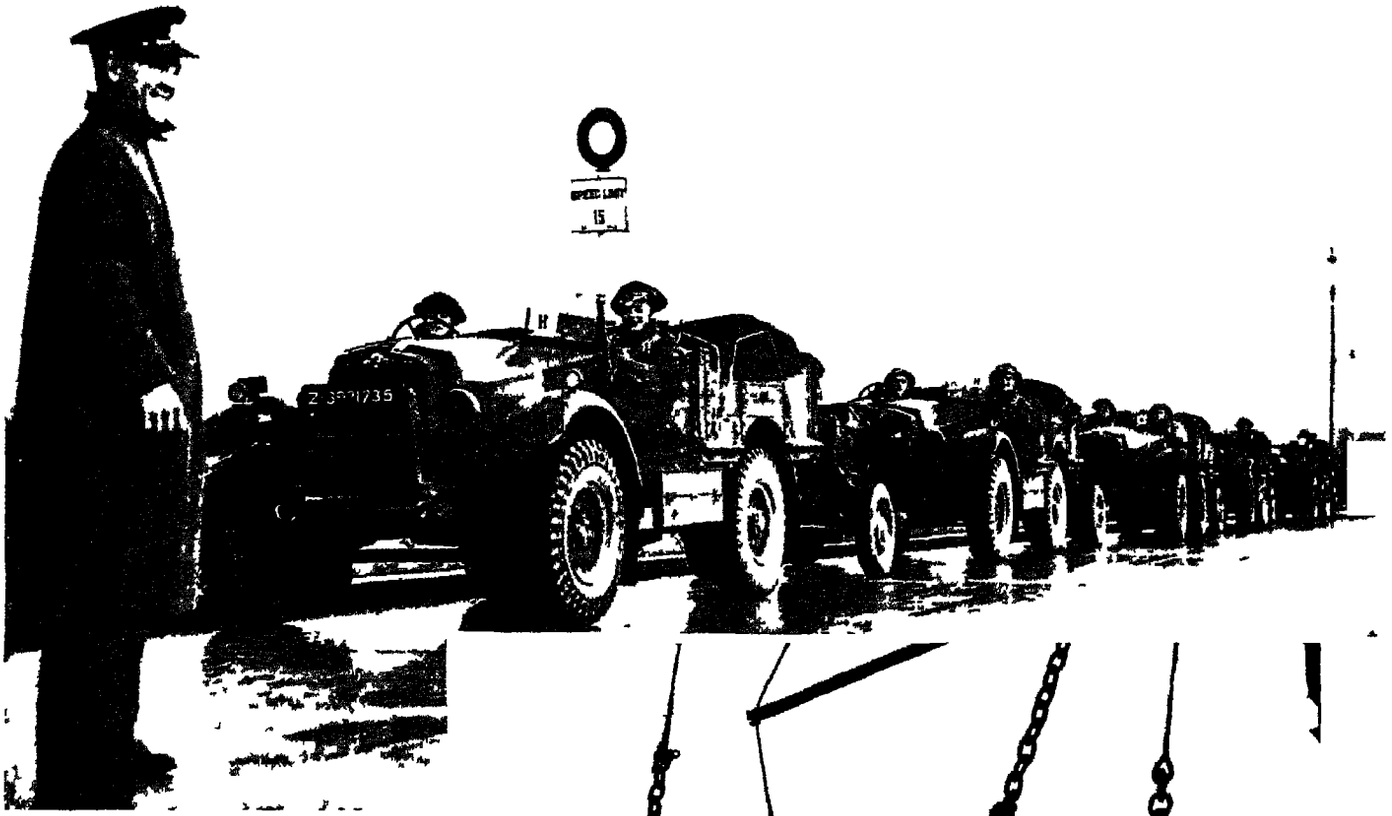
That undertaking, it may be said in parentheses, was given probably at one of the Staff conferences in the summer; certainly the dispatch of a great expeditionary force was not contemplated at the time of the Munich crisis, only a year before. In those days it was thought that, if any British troops were sent across the Channel, they should form a mere token force—an earnest of Britain's co-operation in a war on land, while the full might of the Empire should be demonstrated on the sea and in the air. But Munich changed all that. For the first time it was realized that a great military power had arisen on the Continent—that Germany had achieved a triumphant come-back as a militarist state, ready and eager to recover by the sword all and more than all that the Kaiser had lost a generation before. France could not be expected to bear the whole brunt of a sudden onslaught, particularly if she were obliged to keep great armies in readiness for emergencies on the Italian frontier and on that of Franco's Spain in the Pyrenees. Menaced on two fronts and attacked in force on a third, France must stagger beneath the shock, and in any event must suffer much more than a fair share of the initial casualties. So those in Britain who remembered all too vividly the slaughter, as colossal as it was needless,

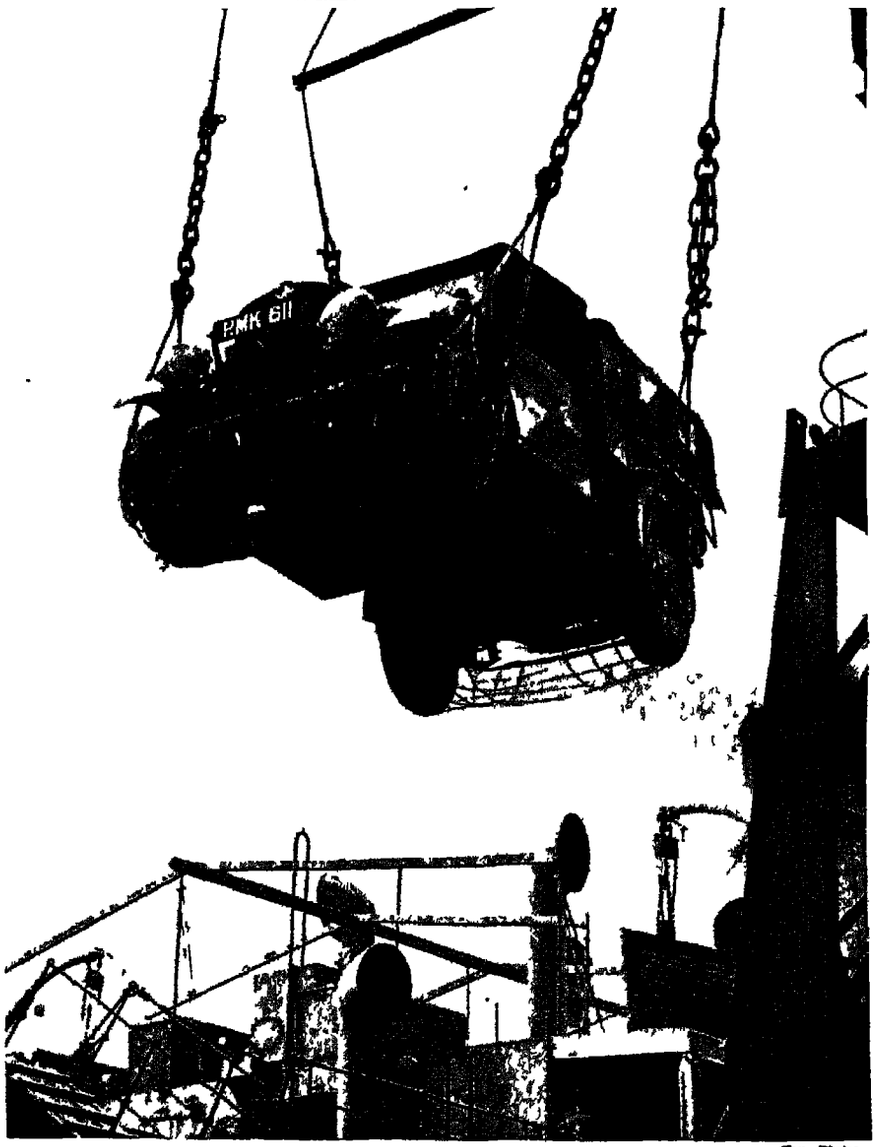
**BLOCKHOUSES IN THE MAKING**

**Here Mr. Leslie Hore-Belisha, Britain's War Minister, is seen at the front watching an early stage in the building of a blockhouse. Around the steel skeleton which these men are assembling will be constructed the walls and roof of the strongpoint.**

*British Official Photograph · Crown copyright*







Fox Photos

**LORRIES BY THE THOUSAND FOR THE FRONT**

Thousands of motor vehicles were transported to France in the weeks following the outbreak of war, and Mr. Hore-Belisha stated on November 22 that it was "a question of vehicles, vehicles and more vehicles." Top photograph shows a convoy of British lorries prior to embarkation; and below, one of them is seen in the slings being hoisted aboard a transport

on the Somme and at Passchendaele, were overborne at the council-table or somehow converted to another view.

Certainly when it was announced that Britain had sent to France not a mere token force but an army greater even than that which left our shores in 1914, there was none to cavil. Rather there was pride that Britain was able to spare for the foreign front so large and so splendidly equipped an army. "Within six weeks of the outbreak of war in 1914," said Mr. Hore-Belisha in the speech mentioned above, "we had transported to France 148,000 men. Within five weeks of the outbreak of this war we had transported to France 158,000 men. During this period we have also created our base and lines of communication organization so as to assure the regular flow of supplies and munitions of every kind and to receive further contingents as and when we may decide to send them."

**158,000 Safe In France**

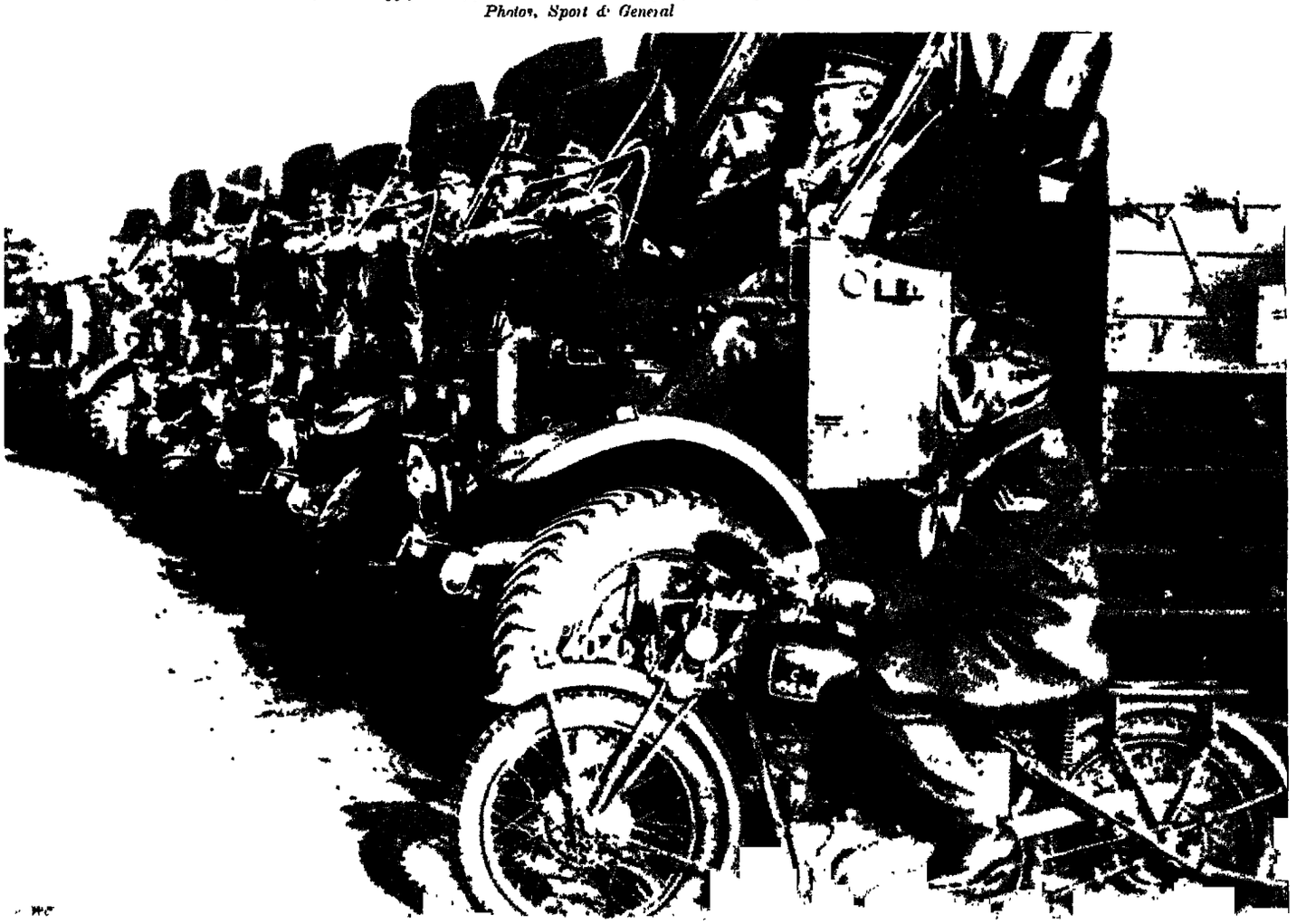
During the period of embarkation, the Minister of War proceeded, the convoys averaged three a night. "It was a small body of specially selected officers in the War Office who with seven confidential clerks and typists secretly worked out every detail of this plan for moving the Army and the Royal Air Force to France. They foresaw and provided for every need: the selection of ports and docks, of roads and railways, of accommodation of all types, of rest camps and depots, of hospitals and repair shops, at every

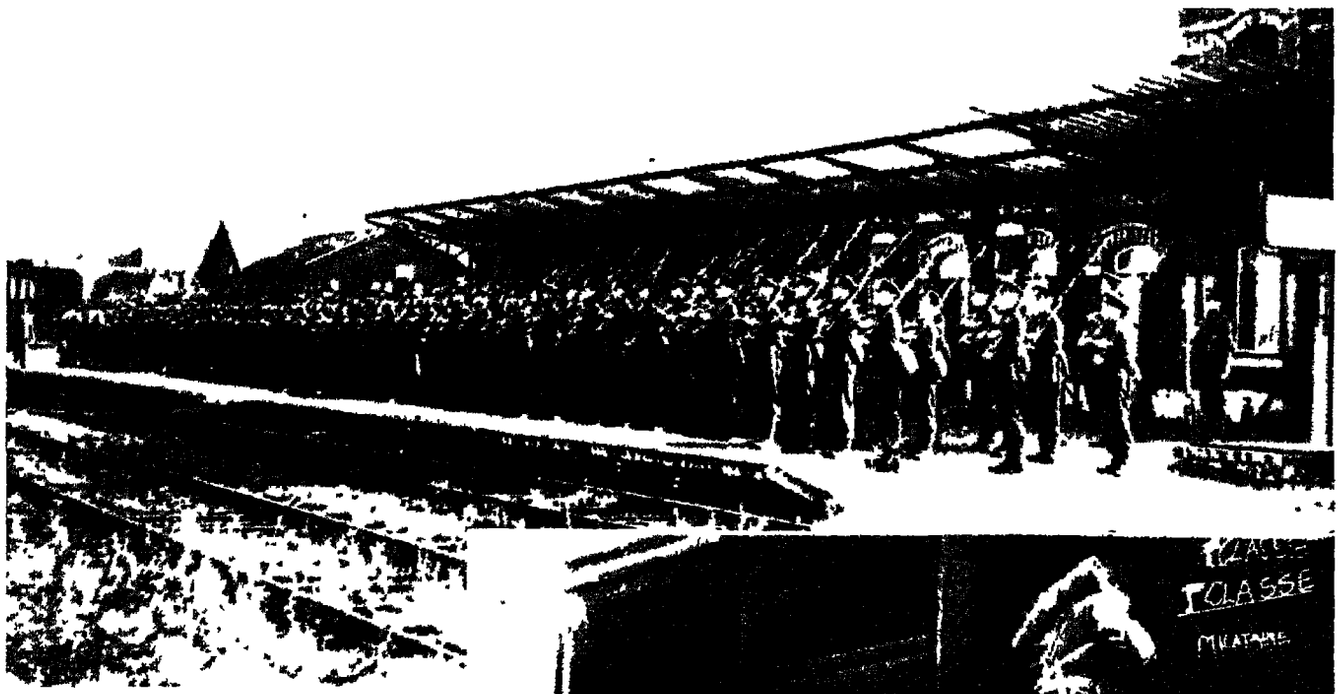


## BRITISH TRANSPORT LANDS IN FRANCE

A convoy of motor-lorries, waiting for embarkation, is shown in page 209. Here is more British transport: a line of R.A.S.C. wagons, drawn up for inspection in France, the men wearing their gas masks, is seen in the photograph below; and above, small supply tanks, just landed at a French port, are being run up on to railway trucks.

*Photos, Sport & General*






BACK TO THE OLD CATTLE TRUCKS

Once again British soldiers, following in their fathers' footsteps, taste the joys of travelling in the French troop-trains. Those in the photograph above seem very cheerful about it, perhaps because some wag has scribbled a sarcastic "1st Class" upon the wagon. The upper photograph shows a detachment of British troops, just detrained at a French station.

*Photos, British Official: Crown copyright, Planet News*

stage on both sides of the Channel. Those who belong to the military profession, having in their arrangements to adjust themselves always to the unexpected and the unforeseen, have to show in the preparation and execution of complicated projects a resource and efficiency which can rarely be exacted from those engaged in civilian enterprises. The Expeditionary Force has been transported to France intact without a casualty to any of its personnel."

Comparison with 1914 is natural, but in many respects no real comparison is possible. Then the men were mostly infantry and they marched on to the ships; transport and guns were drawn by horses that were led on board; the material of war that the soldier did not carry on his back or in his hand was so light that it could be hoisted by a small derrick. In those days there were only 800 mechanized vehicles with the Army, and rarely did a load exceed two tons.

How different a state of affairs existed in 1939! To quote from Mr. Hore-Belisha's speech again: "We have already on this occasion transported to France more than 25,000 vehicles, including tanks, some of them of enormous dimensions and weighing 15 tons apiece or more. Normal shore cranes could not raise them, special ships were required to carry them, and highly trained stevedores to manipulate them. Consequently, as contrasted with 1914, where ordinary vessels took men and material together from the usual ports, in this case the men travelled separately and the heavier mechanisms had to be transported from more distant ports, where special facilities were available. The arrangements for the reunion of the troops and their material on the other side made an additional complication."

Other differences between 1914 and 1939 were that on the former occasion the ports of disembarkation were much nearer the actual war zone than they could be in 1939, and, moreover, owing to the menace of air attack, much more devious routes to the front had to be taken. Men and vehicles were dispersed in small groups and did their marching at night when their movement was invisible from the air. Again, the



mechanized transport created a huge new set of problems. Every horse, as Mr. Hore-Belisha said, "eats the same food and can continue, like man, to move though hungry. Vehicles come to a standstill when their tanks are empty." In the new Expeditionary Force were 50 different types of vehicles, most of them requiring a different grade of fuel and oil. Before they could be moved far from the base great reserves of spare parts and petrol had to be stored, while a series of completely equipped workshops had to come into being to replace the attentions of the veterinary surgeons of 1914.

Well might Mr. Hore-Belisha stress the contrast in order to bring out the magnitude of the present achievement. "None of these problems"—those attendant on the wholesale mechanization—"existed, except in embryo, in 1914. It was a light Army that travelled then. Nearly 60 per cent of the fighting troops in 1914 were infantrymen, relying on their rifles and bayonets and two machine-guns a battalion. Now only 20 per cent of the fighting troops are infantrymen, with 50 Bren guns, 22 anti-tank rifles, and other weapons as well with each battalion. It will be seen by this one example how much more effectively armed with fire-power is the present Expeditionary Force." He might have added that even in 1914 the Kaiser's generals were astounded at the fire-power of the British line; they could not believe that the men were armed only with rifles and not machine-guns, so rapid and accurate was their fire.

Chief and his Corps Commanders report of them in terms of the highest pride."

Then in a striking passage the War Minister paid a tribute to all those who had co-operated in the transport of the new Expeditionary Force—to the various Government Departments, both in this country and in France, to the Navy and the R.A.F. "The Navy has not lost its secret, and the Air Force has held its protecting wings over another element of danger."

Now that the great undertaking had been successfully accomplished, the silence which had been imposed upon the Press was raised, and a body of war correspondents proceeded across the Channel charged with the task of keeping the people at home informed of the day-to-day conditions and happenings at the front. First, however, they had to



**SOLDIERS' 'GRUB' AND SOLDIERS' 'TUB'**

**When a number of men are billeted in one building the problem of baths is apt to present difficulties, but, as can be seen above, where there's a will there's a way; tubs and pails, even if the latter are somewhat small for a grown man, are soon pressed into service. At top, army cooks watching over an array of dixies.**

***British Official Photographs: Crown copyright***

However different the equipment, however different the means and the methods of making war, there was one respect, said Mr. Hore-Belisha, "in which our Army had not altered: its relations with our Allies—who have welcomed the men so generously—are as good-humoured. The catchwords of the soldiers are as amusing." He had been quite recently on a visit to B.H.Q. in France and had met many of the men himself. "I would like their parents and wives to know that they are in fine spirit.... The Commander-in-

tell of the voyage over—a voyage in vessels most elaborately and completely "blacked-out," in which even the smoking of cigarettes on deck was strictly forbidden. Mr. Douglas Williams, the War Correspondent of "The Daily Telegraph," reported that he himself sailed in a vessel in which there were 1,200 troops, including a scattering of padres, doctors, engineers and R.A.S.C. men, as well as a handful of nurses in uniform and members of the Army Educational Corps. "The discipline, patience and good spirits of these units



## MAKING THE BEST OF IT—THEN AND NOW

**There is a remarkable similarity between these two pictures, despite the fact that a quarter of a century separates them. The top photograph shows men of the 5th Dragoon Guards resting in a stable during that momentous autumn of 1914. In 1939 British troops were once again making themselves at home in French farmhouse stables, as is shown by the photograph below of our infantry in temporary billets, "somewhere in France."**

*Photos, Mrs. R. Aindow; British Official: Crown copyright*



during the long, tiresome and extremely rough crossing, packed sardine-like along the airless decks of the vessel, were amazing." Each man had but eighteen inches or so of deck boards on which to sleep, and the officers slept on the cabin floor. As for food, they had but bully beef and biscuit. Yet cheerfulness was on every hand, and songs were struck up from time to time during the night until at dawn the men, most of whom had never been abroad before, hastened to the bulwarks and strove to be the first to catch a glimpse of the land mentioned so often in their fathers' talk of the war of yesterday.

Arrived at the French port, the young soldiers—all of whom, said Mr. Williams, had apparently found the time and the means to wash and shave " as though they were calmly preparing for a day in the City or their normal peacetime avocation "—poured down the gangways and, after hot tea and sandwiches on the dockside, marched to the trains which were to take them to their places of assembly " Somewhere in France."

As Mr. Hore-Belisha said, the relations of the men with the French people were excellent from the very beginning. As in 1914, the crowds flocked about the marching columns and did their best to show that they were more than welcome. And yet there was a difference. When the " Old Contemptibles " were greeted with almost hysterical joy at Boulogne a generation earlier, men had no real knowledge of what modern war might and would mean. Twenty-five years later they knew only too well, and the knowledge made any suggestion of the spirit of carefree carnival out of place. The troops spoke and acted as men who were aware of the serious character of the venture on which they had embarked. Yet all the same they joked and whistled and sang, crowded about the hucksters' stalls on the quays and bought pretty souvenirs for the mother or the girl at home, and looked with deeply interested eyes at the signs in a strange language, the police in such different uniforms, and all the other little indications of the fact that they were in a foreign—but not in the least an unfriendly—land. It was not long before one and all realized that the way had been prepared for them, not only by the officers of the Staff and the departmental corps who had planned the great movement, but by those men of a generation ago, men whom they knew or perchance had only heard of.

Only as the weeks passed was the magnitude of the Army transportation generally realized. Then one by one tributes were paid in the press to the men—still anonymous so far as the public were concerned—who had formed the plans for the great movement. The gentlemen of the Staff have been often held up to ridicule, and the exposure of their blunders in peace and even more in war is gloated over for long. Sometimes the censure is deserved.

**Praiseworthy Organization**

But here is a case where grateful thanks were truly earned, even if they were not publicly accorded. The first assembly of the units chosen for the Field Force, their equipment and the establishment of a long and lengthening line of depots and communications, the formation of bases covering great areas, the chartering of trains and ships, the working out of a most elaborate time-table so that there should be no congestion, no time-wasting, no unnecessary interference with the requirements of civilian life—here are problems requiring intelligence and initiative of the highest and rarest order for their solution.

The working out of such problems is no doubt part of the Staff's daily task, but the opportunities for practice on a large scale are wanting—what is an Aldershot or Tidworth Tattoo to the dispatch of 150,000 men ?—and, moreover, the movement had to be conducted, so far as the sea crossing was concerned, at night, and always—in Britain, in the Channel, and in France—hostile attack from the air was an ever-present,

**ALLIES MEET ON THE MARCH**

**Below, a column of British troops is seen passing a detachment of French troops as they march along the cobbled streets of a French town. Unlike their predecessors of 1914–18, who marched in column of fours, these British infantrymen step out in column of threes.**

*Photo, Planet News*



indeed exceedingly likely, possibility. Yet the stream of men and guns, tanks and transport, went on uninterruptedly; not a man was lost in the journey whether by land or by sea.

Of the first stage of the march there is little to say—at least, little has been said. We may suppose the men paraded for overseas—a phrase which will evoke deep memories in those who played a part in the first Great War. But there were no marches through cheering crowds, no exuberant send-offs. Rather the troops slipped away practically unnoticed, saying their farewells almost surreptitiously. By road and by rail they converged on the ports in the



south, whence they were to be shipped across the Channel. One port in particular was thronged for days with hundreds of vehicles parked in its streets waiting the official word to embark. The men themselves, for the most part, passed from the train straight on to the ships. Trains from Scotland, from the east of England and from the west poured into the docks in a regular, unbroken stream. At one time it was stated that three troop-trains an hour were arriving. There was not a hitch anywhere. The transport of more than 150,000 men had been worked out to the last detail.

And here let something be said of the role of the French Navy in the transport to France of the first wave of the Expeditionary Force. It is not generally



**AFFIRMING THE ENTENTE CORDIALE**

**British and French soldiers were not long in establishing a happy comradeship, and above a party of them is seen seated on the terrasse of a Paris café, drinking a toast to victory. The French soldiers may be distinguished by the numbers on their collars. Left, a British officer obtains information from a French policeman in the Champs Elysées, Paris.**

*Photos, Planet News; Wide World*

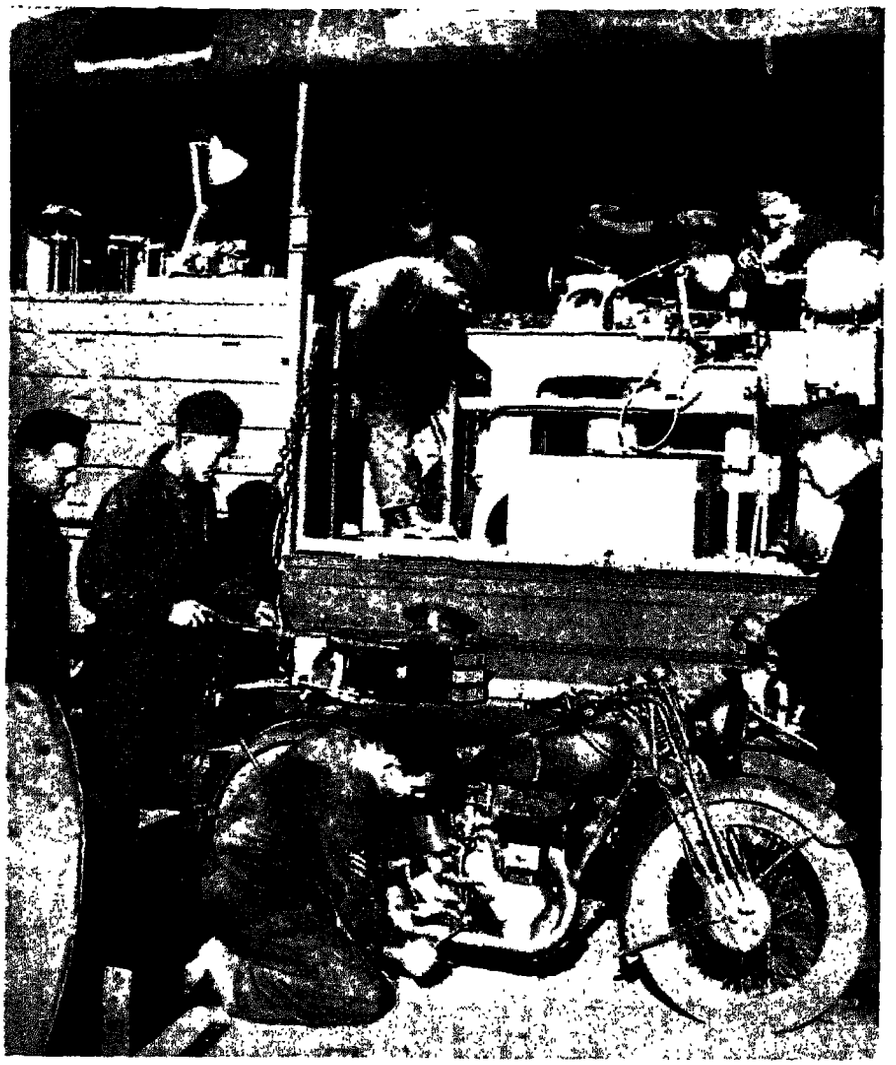
understood that, although during the actual crossing of the Channel the troop-ships were accompanied by vessels of the British Navy, for a considerable distance from the French coast the French Navy undertook the protection of the transports until their actual arrival at the French ports. While the patrol vessels and mine-sweepers remained at sea seeking and destroying mines which might have been laid fathoms below the surface, reconnaissance vessels, police boats from the harbours, and pilot boats stood by to receive the transports. The French Navy also ensured the actual defence of the ports and the coast—a task which involved keeping defence and anti-aircraft patrols and look-out and signalling stations constantly on the alert. Protective nets and minefields fell to be carried out by a crowd of small craft constantly at sea.

For the most part the transports arrived at night or at dawn with lights extinguished and their decks crowded with troops and war material. As the lighthouses had been shut down, the ships were piloted through French waters with the help of a modified system of buoys. One by one the transports drew alongside the quay, gangways were lowered and the soldiers filed down them. Then tugs pulled the empty ship away from the quay; another transport came alongside and another crowd of soldiers fell in and marched away. Several hundred transports arrived in French ports in a single month, and sometimes ten transports were discharging simultaneously on to the quays lit only with dim blue lights. Looking back on the achievement it will be realized how close and how successful was the collaboration between the staffs of the French Army and Navy and that of the British headquarters.

That co-operation was even more in evidence when the troops set off on their journey to the front. It was now that the Military Police came into their own, and shepherded 25,000 Army vehicles through a strange countryside to their places near the front line. Some 720 military policemen did the job—men who were themselves strangers in a strange land. With but 24 hours to acquaint themselves with the roads in the sector, these men kept the traffic moving without a single big block or hold-up or any really serious inconvenience to the local traffic.

**On the Road to the Front**

It was said that never a driver of tank or armoured car, of lorry or ambulance, had need to open a map to find h... Always the police were ... him, or had already ... the route so ...



**MECHANIZED ARMY NEEDS TRAVELLING WORKSHOPS**

**The transport to France of a vast mechanised army entailed the setting up in that country of a large number of completely equipped mobile transport workshops. Above, one of these travelling workshops is seen in a French village while repairs are made to a dispatch rider's motor-cycle.**

*British Official Photograph: Crown copyright*

read. Breakdowns and accidents were negligible; the most serious was an ammunition wagon which caught fire and blew up; even then there were no casualties. No vehicle took more than ten days over the journey from the port of disembarkation to its new car park up the line, and the speed was never allowed to exceed 20 miles per hour. Perhaps the finest testimony to the excellence of the British police—many of whom only a short time before had been A.A. patrols on the roads at home—was that after a day's working the French withdrew many of their own men who had been posted as assistants and liaison officers to the Military Police. There were even "courtesy cops" who kept a stern eye on driving vagaries, and it was said that in those towns temporarily in British occupation the local traffic paid an altogether unusual regard to the signals made by the controllers in khaki.

In the matter of billeting as in that of transport, Anglo-French co-operation was markedly in evidence. The utmost deference was paid to the local authorities, and it was with the help of the Maire and the local chief of police that officers and men were allotted their quarters in inns, cafés, and estaminets, private houses and farms.

Step by step, stage by stage, the various units—infantry and cavalry (petrol-driven for the most part), tanks and signals, men of the R.A.M.C., the Ordnance and the Service Corps—moved in one vast unbroken stream to those places with such strange-sounding names that had been mentioned in the operation orders. At practically every crossroads a stalwart British policeman waved on or held up the traffic with the air of one born to be obeyed. Everywhere notices in English pointed the way to this town and that. All was very well ordered, excellently carried out, efficient in a thoroughly British way.

After some days on the road the various units arrived at their destinations. Then they rapidly disappeared so far as the eye could see. When Mr. E. A. Montague, War Correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian," went to visit the British Army at the front, he said that the thing that impressed him most was the remarkable way in which a force of 158,000 men could be tucked away in a peacetime landscape. "The handling of our troops," he said, "has been a triumph of concealment."

Though right in the war zone soldiers to be seen were remarkably few—just one or two walking up the village street, a sentry, an occasional dispatch rider roaring down the cobbled road. "One passes an inconspicuous house with no special activity about it, and is told that it is a corps headquarters. In a distant field a few small figures are practising short rushes among the cabbages. But one would never guess the presence of an army. A little nearer the front one notices grey mounds here and there among the green fields. Get out of your car and walk along a muddy cart track towards one of them and you come first to a barbed-wire enclosure. At the gate a sentry admits you, if you have the right pass, and you find that the grey mound is a pill box, a hut of immensely thick concrete banked up with earth in which the defenders live and sleep. They belong to the infantry battalion which is billeted near by. Rows of barbed-wire entanglements protect them from infantry attack.

**Hidden—But Prepared**

"A short distance away to one flank one sees another mound, this time a blockhouse, a pill-box de luxe. With ample rations the crew of a blockhouse could hold out for weeks."

What impressed Mr. Douglas Williams most on the occasion of his first visit was the state of advanced defence of the positions occupied by the British Army. Writing in the "Sunday Times," he remarked on the great contrast with the scene of war that had met his gaze when he visited the French war zone in the autumn of 1914. "Years of preparation with steel and concrete, which following years have thickly covered with a green camouflage of grass and overgrowth, have replaced the hastily thrown up trenches that used to mark battle positions like the criss-cross lines of a gigantic game of noughts and crosses." An occasional aeroplane

flew overhead, but the lack of artillery fire, complete silence, and the absence of any war-damaged buildings formed a curiously calm picture.

A visit to a section of the front line held by British troops soon made it plain that the Army was ready for anything and everything. Everywhere, said Mr. Williams, were perfect discipline, smart appearance, good health and good spirits. He found men billeted in barns, sleeping in warm straw and blankets, while in a courtyard outside field kitchens prepared the midday meal. Food was plentiful and varied, and the men seemed as satisfied as British soldiers—born grousers, all!—could be expected to be. "We are a long way from home," said one, "but taking everything together we are pretty comfortable. Our billets are fine and the food excellent. We have plenty of work and get plenty of sleep. The weather has been pretty fair, if a bit damp, and we are all fit and ready for anything that Jerry may spring on us."

Later in the day Mr. Williams visited one of the blockhouses in the British line, a massive affair of steel and concrete, apparently almost impregnable. Its garrison told him that they felt as safe inside it as if they were in a deep dug-out far below ground. "I don't think Fritz could do much to this thing," said one; "I certainly wouldn't like to have to attack it myself."

"As we left the blockhouse to return to our quarters," continued Mr. Williams, "we passed other troops practising attack across open fields side by side with French peasant women harvesting the last of the season's crops. Small boys drove huge horses much higher than themselves, while old men strove lustily with billhook and rake to fill the enormous carts that waited amid the furrows." His final thought was the complete mechanization of the army. Not a horse was to be seen anywhere, and even the trench digging was done by mechanical excavators.

So in 1939 the British Army crossed to France just as their fathers did in 1914; crossed, and marched "up the line" to meet the same foe. "How strange it is," said Mr. Hore-Belisha in his speech in the House of Commons which we have already quoted, "that twice in a generation men should take this journey, and that sons should be treading again upon a soil made sacred by their fathers. They are grumbling about the same things—mispronouncing the same names—making similar jokes and singing songs which seem to be an echo over the intervening years."

"And," the Secretary of State for War went on, "we may rest assured that they will acquit themselves with the same tenacity, courage, and endurance. However long the struggle and however great the ordeal, they will, as our soldiers did before, take our arms and our cause of freedom to victory."

**BRITISH LIGHT TANKS TO THE DEFENCE OF FRANCE**

**Along the cobbled streets of a French town stretches a long file of light tanks used as Bren gun carriers, while the inhabitants gaze with interest at this further proof of the material co-operation and technical efficiency of their allies.**

*British Official Photograph: Crown copyright*



## *Historic Documents. XLIX*

# *FIRST REVIEW OF BRITAIN'S WAR IN THE AIR*

On October 10, 1939, Sir Kingsley Wood, Secretary of State for Air, reviewed in the House of Commons the work of the Royal Air Force during the first five weeks of war, and outlined further extensive developments of this arm of the fighting services. We print here selected passages from his speech.

THE spirit and moral of the Royal Air Force are splendid. Officers and men are proud of their Force and confident that they can give a good account of themselves and take a heavy toll of the enemy. Each one of them is eager to play his part in active operations. While willing to recognize the fighting qualities of their opponents, they are, I know, inspired by the knowledge that their job is to beat the enemy and to ensure once and for all that aggression and tyranny are ended.

Accounts have already been given of such considerable performances of the Royal Air Force as the attacks on the German Fleet and the engagements with the enemy in Germany and on the Western Front. They show that the spirit and determination of the earlier generation of our flying men have been preserved unimpaired. The men who have already been in action have indeed shown to the full their courage and efficiency.

Not all have returned; and I know that the House will join with me in paying our tribute to the high example set by the gallant pilots and their crews who have lost their lives in the performance of their duty. There is a revealing motto of one of our air squadrons: "I spread my wings and keep my promise"—that undoubtedly was the spirit and the purpose of those brave men.

FULL recognition too should be given to those who, though they have had to stand by at their war stations in a state of instant readiness for action by day or by night, have not yet been engaged in action with the enemy. The intensity of the operations of the Fighter Command, for example, depends largely upon the activities of the enemy.

Instant readiness is demanded, and the strain imposed has been great if not greater, than if active operations were in progress. The keenness and the alertness of these officers and men are of the first order.

The activities of the Coastal Command too have been unremitting and strenuous in the extreme from the first day of war. In the last War aircraft played their part both as auxiliaries to the Navy and in independent operations against submarines, but their activities were limited by the technical development then attained. Today the vastly greater range, speed, and reliability of our aircraft are being fully utilized, as the First Lord demonstrated a few days ago, in close co-operation with the Navy in the task of defeating the submarine and guiding in safety to and from our shores those merchant ships that ply the ocean.

### One Million Miles Flown in One Month

BY its very nature the work is silent and normally unspectacular. It demands continuous flying over the sea in all weathers. The magnitude of the effort of the Coastal Command may be judged by the fact that during the first four weeks of war this Command flew on reconnaissance, anti-submarine, and convoy patrols a distance of approximately 1,000,000 miles and provided air escorts for over 100 convoys.

Our air escorts have also been able to give warning of the approach of enemy craft and of the presence of submarines from ranges which are far beyond the vision of surface craft. Most valuable information as to the habits and movement of enemy submarines and of their varying visibility in different waters have been and are being constantly built up from patient observation, experience and deduction.

The result of these endeavours has been fruitful. During the first four weeks of war submarines were sighted by aircraft on 72 occasions and 34 attacks were delivered, some of which were undoubtedly successful.

The value of the work performed must not be gauged by attacks alone. There is the important preventive factor. We have confirmed from prisoners' statements that the mere presence of an aircraft is sufficient to make a submarine submerge and remain submerged, and that the presence of an air escort often prevents a submarine commander from attacking a convoy. Almost daily there have been clashes with the enemy. Thus, by their incessant activity and alertness, carried out in full co-operation with the Royal Navy and the Naval Air Arm, the units of the Coastal Command are successfully carrying out a service that is vital to our war effort.

Again, in the Bomber Command, apart from the larger operations upon which they have been engaged, there have been the many and valuable reconnaissance flights. They have taken place day after day over German territory, and hundreds of hours of flying have been recorded. Vital military information has been gained and recorded, and units have familiarized themselves with the country over which they will be called upon to operate. Day and night reconnaissance aircraft are penetrating into the enemy's country, testing his defences and observing his movements and troop concentrations. A complete photographic map of the Siegfried Line has been made. Many photographs taken from only a few hundred feet above the line go to its composition. . . .

### 'Bomphlets' for the German People

THE distribution of messages to the German people over large areas of enemy territory which has been combined with the successful reconnaissance work has, I believe, been of considerable value in giving information to the people of Germany. It is interesting to note as regards their interest to the German people that a number of these messages were recently found in the possession of German prisoners, notwithstanding the pains and penalties threatened against persons who picked up such communications. . . .

I can of necessity speak only in general terms of our aircraft production. We have built up on broad foundations and with progressively increasing speed a vast productive machine which comprises not only the old-established aircraft firms and the Government factories but the great new factories erected by well-known engineering and other organizations and hundreds of sub-contracting firms great and small.

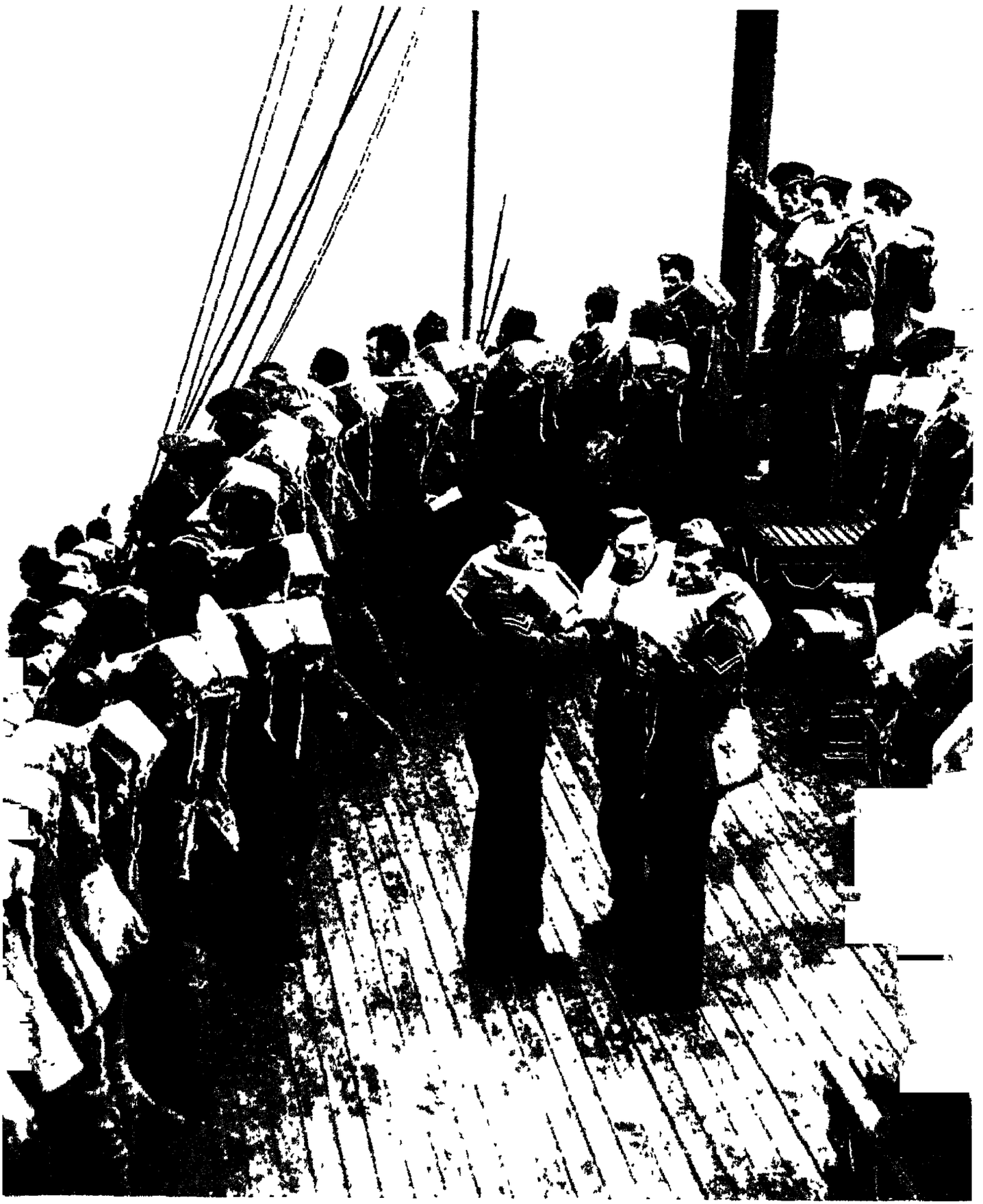
At the outbreak of war the rate of aircraft production represented an achievement unprecedented in this country in time of peace. Moreover, our factories are every day increasing their labour force and the increased experience of aircraft work has already resulted in an increased output rate per man. New factories are also nearing completion. . . .

Immediately war broke out our carefully prepared plans for greatly increased production were put into effect, and they will mean in due course a rate of production more than twice the considerable figure we have now reached. Beyond all this, since the outbreak of hostilities the War Cabinet has made a fresh examination of the whole position, and authority has been given, and is being immediately put into effect, to add considerably to our production facilities and to ensure us still further against the possible effects of enemy action. . . .

NOTHING has given us greater encouragement since the war began than the keen desire of all parts of the Empire to play an effective part in air defence. I am thinking not only of the Dominions and India but of the Colonies.

The Dominions have already signified their intention of making a great and powerful contribution to the common cause in relation to air defence. In the last Great War the Dominions gave us large numbers of skilful and courageous pilots and crews. Again today in the air the whole strength of the Empire is being marshalled, and there is no doubt that the great Dominion effort of 25 years ago will be largely exceeded in the present conflict. . . .

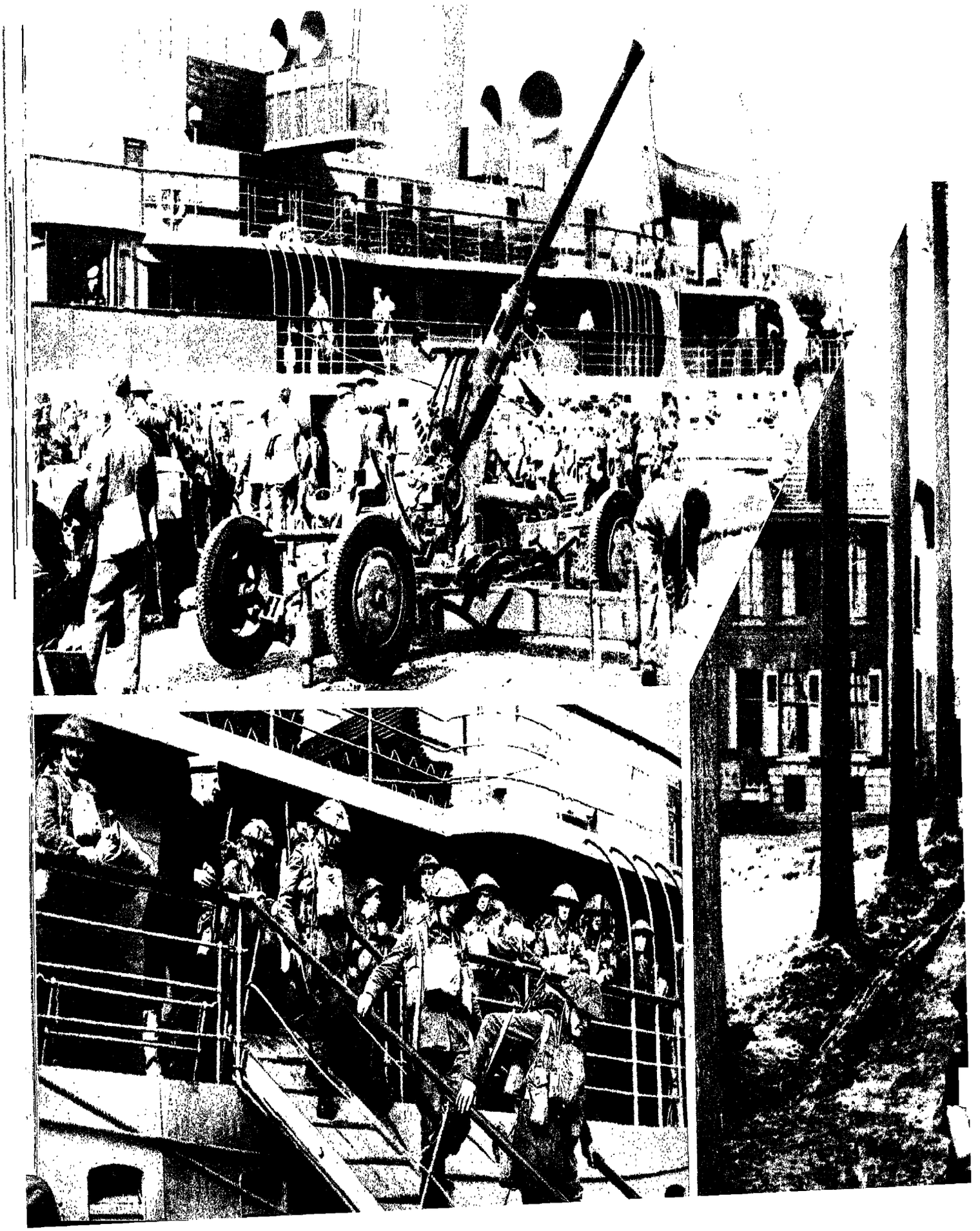
We shall have our dangers, our ordeals, and our difficulties, but none of us doubts that, when the great test comes again, our airmen of today—from the Motherland and overseas—will once more record the same magnificent achievements, self-sacrifice, and devotion to duty.



## CHANNEL CROSSING—BUT NOT A PLEASURE TRIP

Here are a few of the first 158,000 men of the British Expeditionary Force on their way across the Channel, wearing life-saving gear so as to be ready for any emergency. For many of the men it was their first trip to sea, and they clustered eagerly along the sides striving to catch their first glimpse of the land of France—on whose soil the fathers of so many of them had fought.

*British Official Photograph: Crown copyright*

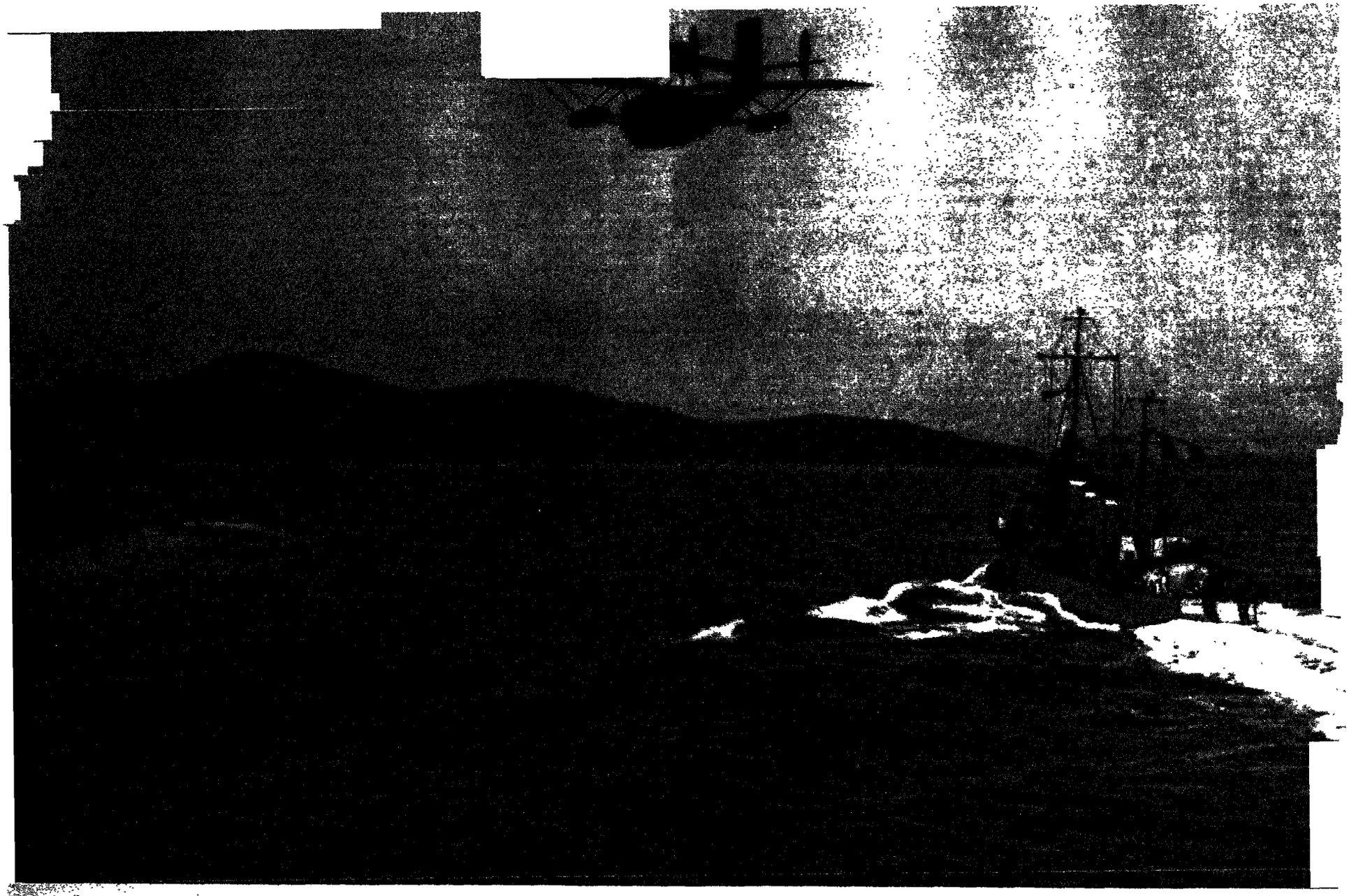


## HOW THE B.E.F. LANDED IN FRANCE

The photographs in the facing page show British soldiers disembarking from a transport "somewhere on the French coast." In the upper picture—the scene on the quayside after they had landed—an anti-aircraft gun is seen in the foreground. The photograph in this page shows a British convoy halted in the tree-lined avenue of a French village, where a British military policeman is on traffic duty

*British Official Photographs : Crown Copyright*





**OUR ALLIES WATCH OVER THE B.E.F.**

The ever-present danger of mines and hostile submarines calls for unremitting vigilance on the part of the aircraft and vessels which protect the convoyed merchant ships and troop transports of the Allies. In this photograph a huge French seaplane is seen flying over French warships which are preceding a convoy. As related in Chapter 21, the French Navy, by their watch and ward, played an invaluable part in the safe transport to France of the first batch of the British Expeditionary Force

*Photo, Topical*

Chapter 22

# THE AIR WAR: A MONTH'S TALE OF RAID AND RECONNAISSANCE

*A Survey of the Period Sept. 18 to Oct. 20, 1939—Ineffective German Attack on Firth of Forth : Eye-Witnesses' Stories—The Raid on Scapa Flow—German Fleet Attacked in Heligoland Bight—Combats over the Siegfried Line—Heroic Rescue of an Airman—Successful Reconnaissance Work—Contrasted Views of Aerial Superiority*

A SURVEY of aerial operations during the period Sept. 18 to Oct. 20, 1939, enables two conclusions to be drawn, both of outstanding interest and importance The first is the extraordinarily high efficiency of the defence of the United Kingdom by the Royal Air Force and the organizations associated with it, including the anti-aircraft batteries and the Observer Corps ; and the second is the indication that ships are more difficult targets for bombing attacks on active service than the practices of peace had suggested.

The Royal Air Force actions were complete and conclusive, and will be remembered for their absolute mastery of the situation. The first test was on the occasion of the first German raid to reach Britain, the one launched in the early afternoon of Monday, October 16, on the Firth of Forth area. In the morning, from about 9 a.m. on until 1.30 p.m., enemy aeroplanes had approached the Scottish coast at intervals, but no contact had been made with them by the British defences. Then, at 2.30, out of a blue sky came a formation estimated at twelve aeroplanes, mostly Dornier 17s, in a steep power glide towards the Forth Bridge. Near the bridge there were three warships—the cruisers "Southampton" and "Edinburgh" and the destroyer "Mohawk," which last was coming in after convoy duty and was just then approaching its moorings. It has been suggested that the German pilots intended to make dive-bombing attacks but that they changed these to "glide" bombing because they were disturbed by anti-aircraft fire. More evidence would be needed before this view can be accepted.

**The Firth of Forth Raid**

At any rate the bombing attacks were made low, the machines only just clearing the Forth Bridge. A bomb glanced off the bow of the "Southampton" and fell into and sank the Admiral's barge and a pinnace moored alongside, both of them empty. Splinters of the bomb caused three casualties on the "Southampton" and seven on the "Edinburgh." Another bomb fell near the "Mohawk", since this vessel was coming in, more men were on deck and the casualties from splinters were correspondingly heavy. They included the commanding officer and the First Lieutenant. While this had been going on the defences had come into action, although no warning had been sounded in Edinburgh. Guns blazed and Royal Air Force fighters soared to the attack. The effectiveness of the defences was remarkable.

The first contact between British and German aeroplanes was near May Island, at the entrance to the Firth of Forth. A sharp combat took place, watched by people on the ground. The machines circled with guns firing, and the enemy lost height and eventually fell into the sea. This combat was followed by one off Crail. In all, four German aeroplanes were brought down, one by anti-aircraft gunfire. The crew of one enemy craft was rescued by a destroyer, but one airman died afterwards.

Eye-witness accounts there were in plenty of this remarkable raid. They can be pieced together to form a picture. First of all in the city of Edinburgh, when the bombers were on their way as yet unknown to the British defences, the members of a special committee were assembling to consider the relaxation of black-out rules in the interests of transport safety. There were some people who argued that attacks were not likely to come so far away from the nearest German air bases, and that it was ridiculous to preserve the strict black-out rules that had been made in Edinburgh and the surrounding districts. It was when the discussion on these points was about to start that the guns opened up and the bombs began to fall. The committee decided to adjourn and to abandon the subject.

One eye-witness said that the bombers came over from the direction of Rosyth and, swooping low, attempted to hit the Forth Bridge.

"Two British fighters," this man added, "made to attack them, but they were unable to get to grips with the German aeroplanes because of anti-aircraft fire. The R.A.F. machines then changed their tactics and appeared to be driving the enemy aeroplanes into the fire from the anti-aircraft guns. One of the German machines was hit and came down in the water. Shortly after the wreckage was towed into Queensferry."

Perhaps the most astonishing experiences were those of passengers in a train which was actually crossing the Forth Bridge at the time the attack was in full swing. One passenger said that he was in the train from Edinburgh to Dunfermline, and that at Dalmeny they were told there was a raid in progress. Most of the passengers preferred to continue the journey. As they travelled slowly across the bridge they were able to see two aeroplanes, one near the south shore and one near the north shore of the Forth.

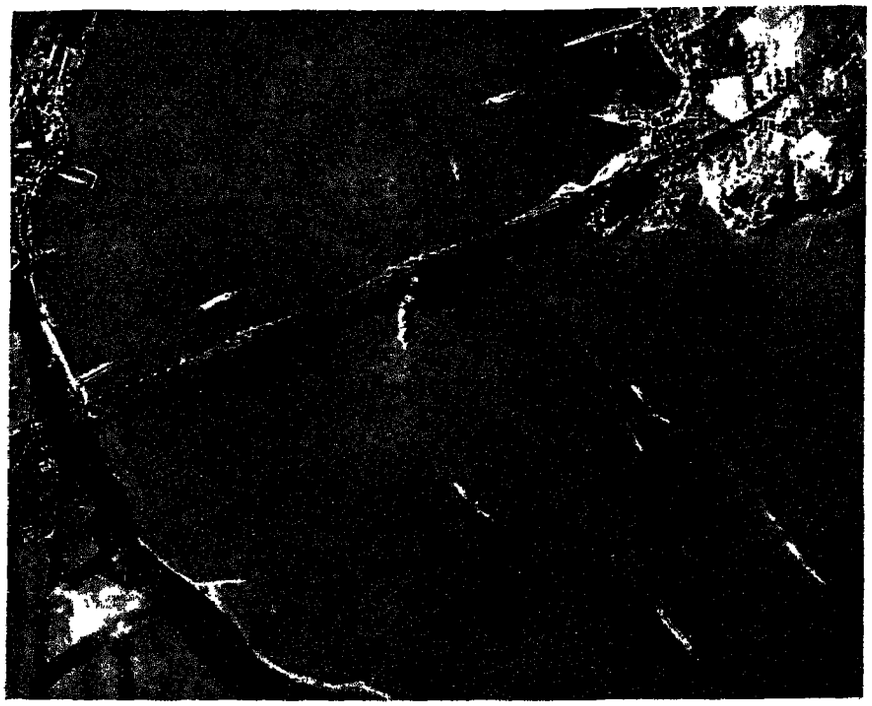
The greenkeeper of a golf course saw part of an air fight in which three machines were engaged, flying rather low over the sea. One of them was what he described as a "big black bomber," and the others were British fighters. "I could see spurts of flame and hear the guns," he said. "Then in a cloud of smoke the bomber plunged into the sea." A fishing boat crew, which rescued three out of four of the crew of a German bomber brought down by the R.A.F., described what was probably the same fight from a different angle. They saw the "big black bomber" and the two fighters. The fighters made rings round the bomber and sometimes attacked from above, sometimes from below. When the bomber went down one wing struck the water first. Just before they reached the wreck the fishermen saw another German bomber which flew by overhead low down. Fighters were also seen in pursuit of this machine.

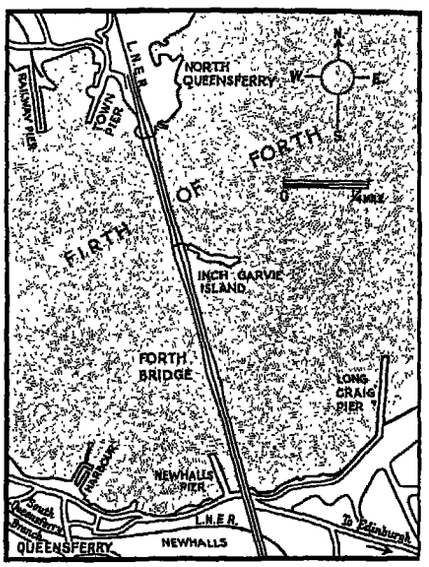
The fishermen threw ropes to the crew of the wrecked bomber and pulled in three. The fourth went down with the machine. The man who appeared to be in charge had a bad eye injury; another had been shot in the ribs, and the third in the arm. One of the fishermen was given a gold signet ring by a German airman as an expression of his gratitude.

**Enemies Rescued**

Citizens of Edinburgh climbed on to roofs to see the raid, and in the Trinity district householders stood about in groups watching the spectacle.

The raid lent colour to [illegible] that the Germans were






**NAZI RAID ON THE FIRTH OF FORTH**

On October 16, 1939, an ineffective German air attack was launched upon British warships in the Firth of Forth. Above, a photograph from the "Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung," alleged to have been taken by a Nazi airman. According to German propaganda, the object beneath the bridge, in reality Inch Garvie island, was an exploding bomb! Below, a raider driven off after dropping a bomb near H.M.S. "Edinburgh." Right, is a map of the district.

were seen. R.A.F. fighters went into action and shot them both down. On this same day (Tuesday, October 17) the Royal Mail steamer "Stola," plying between Scapa and Thurso, was attacked and bombs fell round it. On this occasion a German aeroplane was brought down by anti-aircraft gunfire.

Concluding episodes of these raids took place on Thursday, October 19,

concentrate their aerial attack on British shipping and ports, and this theory received further support soon afterwards. Another feature of the Firth of Forth raid was that it marked the first occasion on which the new air-raid policy adopted by the Fighter Command of the Royal Air Force (responsible for the air defences of Great Britain) was put into operation. This policy was explained later in the month by Sir Kingsley Wood, who said that it had been decided not to sound the air-raid warning sirens unless the Fighter Command had good reason to suppose that a fairly heavy attack was likely against places where the civil population would be endangered.

On October 17, the day following the Firth of Forth attack, there was a raid on Scapa Flow. It was thought that this might presage an attack in force, and air-raid warnings were sounded from Scapa in the north to Kent in the south. Two bombs fell near the "Iron Duke," which sustained certain damage, but there were no British casualties. One of the German aircraft was shot down and another was damaged. A second raid followed close on the first, and another German machine was shot down. The formations were estimated at six and four. Later, off the north-east coast, two enemy aeroplanes





**KILLED IN A GERMAN AIR RAID**

**During the German air raid on the Firth of Forth on October 16 there were several casualties on the destroyer "Mohawk" from bomb splinters. Among those killed was Commander R. F. Jolly (above).**

*Photo, Sport & General*

and Friday, October 20. On Thursday two German airmen whose aeroplane had been shot down on Tuesday landed on the Yorkshire coast, after drifting about in the North Sea in their collapsible boat.

Little doubt was felt after the raids that the Germans were directing their air arm at the British fleet and British shipping. This was taken as in part an admission that the U-boat campaign was failing in its purpose. The actions both at the Firth of Forth and at Scapa were sound tests of the defences, and showed that they were well organized and efficient. The fighters which attacked the bombers raiding the Firth of Forth were manned by members of the former Auxiliary Air Force.

The first enemy air attack on British warships was delivered on September 26. A squadron of the Home Fleet—including capital ships, an aircraft carrier, a cruiser and destroyers—was attacked in the North Sea by twenty German aircraft. None of the ships was hit, and the enemy were beaten off with the loss of two machines; a third was badly damaged. Three days later the R.A.F. launched an attack on the German fleet in Heligoland Bight. On Friday, September 29, the Air Ministry announced that the raid had taken place and that the British formations had suffered casualties, but as none of the second formation had succeeded in returning, no detailed information was therefore obtainable.

German reports stated that the British attack was made by twelve machines. The Air Ministry said that five failed to return. The Germans stated that two German machines were shot down and forced to alight on the sea, but that their crews were picked up. Various rumours went round, one being that the raid was made in two waves, the first on the lighter German naval craft and the second on the heavier ones. It was said to be the second wave that met the full force of the German defence. There was no official confirmation of this report.

While these oversea operations had been going on there were many encounters on the Western Front. A terrific combat occurred over the Siegfried Line between five Royal Air Force reconnaissance machines of the Fairey Battle type and 15 German Messerschmitt fighters. The Battles were taking photographs and gathering information when the Messerschmitts came up from below, opening fire while they were still on the climb. The Battle is a good deal slower than the Messerschmitt, but the small British formation turned and fought furiously. It seems that a "dog-fight" resembling in general the dog-fights of the war of 1914–18 took place. The pilots of both sides hurled their machines about in attempts to secure favourable positions for opening fire, and the rear gunners of the Battles poured fire and lead on the Messerschmitts every time they got the chance. But numbers and performance together were too much for the British formation. Two Battles went crashing earthwards, one crew at least managing

**Western Front Air Battle**

**FUNERAL OF TWO NAZI RAIDERS**

**Two German airmen were shot down in the raid on the Firth of Forth, and below men of the R.A.F. are seen escorting the coffins to the cemetery, watched by a crowd including women and little children carrying their gas masks.**

*Photo, Keystone*





**LIFE-SAVER FOR NAZI AIRMEN**

**On several occasions when German aircraft were shot down in the sea, the crew were afterwards found drifting about in their collapsible boats A German rubber boat of this type is seen in the photograph above Rowlocks are provided to enable the men to row if the sea is not too rough**

*Photo, International Graphic Press*

to get clear with parachutes The others fought on, but they too were overcome and went to earth.

An account was given by the gunner of one of the British machines who was later saved by his own presence of mind and the courage of a French Algerian soldier. He had met fire with fire during the fight and had succeeded in sending two Messerschmitts down in flames, but his pilot was wounded and the observer shot dead The machine made for home, but before it could get across the lines fire started and the gunner was forced to jump with his parachute. He drifted, and finally came to earth in No-man's-land At once there was a race between German and French troops towards him Machine-gun and rifle bullets were flying, and the gunner was too much hurt to move. Then from among the French troops came a huge Algerian rushing forward from the rest, ignoring the fire. He reached the gunner, lifted him up, and carried him back to the French lines without either of them being hit It was a great feat of courage and daring, and it enabled the gunner to tell his story afterwards in hospital and pay tribute to his rescuer.

The air gunner's story is worth giving in his own words He said that they were over the Siegfried Line when the Germans attacked

"We went up to 20,000 feet and continued our work. We were three in the aeroplane: pilot observer and myself. It was a wonderful day and we could see for miles.

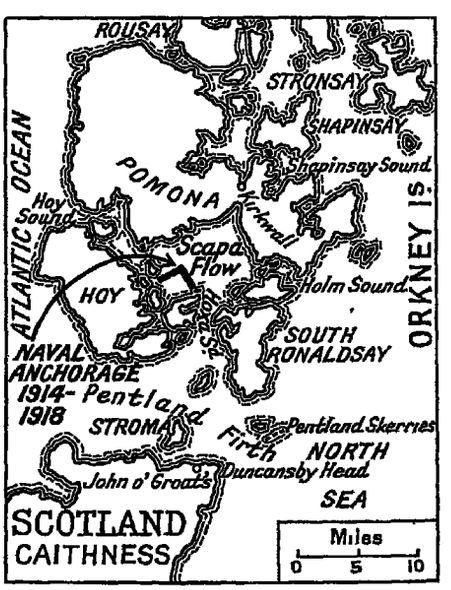
"There were no clouds anywhere and Germany stretched below us. Suddenly we saw enemy aeroplanes swirling up towards us from far down below They were Messerschmitts, three formations of six each We were outnumbered by more than three to one, but we prepared to give battle

'The enemy began their favourite tactics of diving up at us from below, machine-gunning as they came Then one of the aeroplanes attached itself to the tail of my machine and a terrific duel began. I could hear the bullets ripping through the fuselage beside me. The observer was crumpled up in his seat, shot through the head The enemy were using incendiary bullets

'As my clothing began to smoulder the aeroplane behind us swooped up and offered me a target. I gave him all I had, and as the flames blazed up in my face I had time to see him go into a spin and disappear down beneath me If I hadn't been on fire I could have easily shot down more

"My pals accounted for three besides the one I hit Half unconscious, I struggled out of the cockpit and then suddenly saw my parachute open Next I remember floating down while the battle continued above me I saw a German aerodrome below but could not identify it, and I began calculating if the wind would carry me over the French lines. Then, when I had come quite low, I heard firing and realized that bullets were whistling near me I was above the German lines and they were shooting at me It was a terrible situation, but there was just hope that I might get past the German lines before touching down

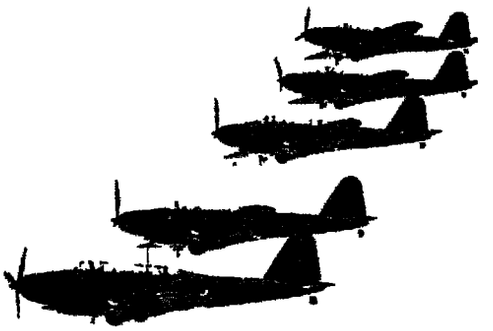
"I saw the Germans leave their trenches and come running towards me. I thought I was done for Then suddenly I saw that men were running from a near by wood as well. I recognized them as French Algerian soldiers Both sides were racing for me Most of the French began to fire at the advancing Germans, but one man came running straight towards me as hard as he could go. He picked me up, slung me over his shoulders and staggered with me into the woods. I was safe, but it was a very near thing The pilot of my aeroplane did not have to jump out until a little later and he




**NAVAL BASE AT SCAPA FLOW**

**Above is Scapa Flow, the land-locked harbour of the Orkney Islands, which was the base of the British Grand Fleet in the war of 1914-18 It was raided by German aircraft on October 17, 1939 (*see* pages 224–25)**







## R.A.F. AT WORK IN FRANCE

Here are some glimpses of British air activity in France Above, a man of the R A F is collecting a batch of plates which have been exposed over the German lines Right, a formation of Fairey "Battles" is seen on patrol Below pilots studying maps before setting out on a reconnaissance flight

*Photos, courtesy of the French Embassy, Associated Press*



came down in French territory safely though very badly burned The observer must have died at once He was shot right through the head

There were some fine actions by French pilots of the Armée de l Air on the Western Front One French airman, flying alone saw three Messerschmitts returning to a base near Saarbruecken He attacked them and, although so heavily outnumbered, succeeded in bringing them down Another feat worthy of record was that of two French airmen who had been taking photographs of positions behind the Siegfried Line They met with heavy opposition, but continued until they had finished their task. They then landed in French territory, but those who went to the machine found both occupants dead Clutched in the observer's hand was the camera, which was subsequently found to contain the pictures he had successfully taken

Among other individual feats of the period was one on October 8. by the crew of a Royal Air Force reconnaissance machine It was on patrol when it sighted and engaged a German flying boat It succeeded in shooting down this craft, and afterwards the German crew were seen in the sea clinging to the wreckage of the machine. The British pilot then directed a ship to their rescue On October 15 the German wireless paid a tribute to the R A F pilot who had been instrumental in saving the German airmen

Apart from the aerial fighting, a great deal of successful reconnaissance work was done by the Royal Air Force On October 9 the entire German frontier from France to the North Sea was reconnoitred by British machines These took off from aerodromes in France and made their reconnaissance inside German territory all the way, leaving enemy territory at the sea border and crossing the sea afterwards to land finally in England

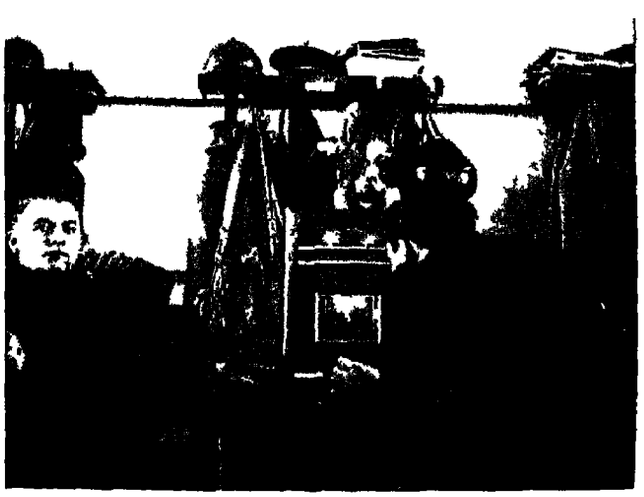
Some light was thrown on the strategy of the Air Staff on the Western Front by remarks made by Air Chief Marshal Sir Cyril Newall on October 7. He said that the French view was that the Royal Air Force had already secured command of the air, and that, although he felt that it was early to endorse that view, he believed that the Royal Air Force was on the right path to attaining that end

**Allied Air Strategy**

Thus command of the air, the objective in the war of 1914, was again laid down as the objective in 1939 This is in contrast to the German theory of air war on the Western Front, which is to seek only localized superiority when it is essential to the movements of ground troops The German " circus " system, which aims at massing machines at strategic points and operating them intensively at those points for brief periods, is well designed for quickly obtaining local superiority. But the British theory has always been that over-all superiority is needed, and on this account the use of escorting aeroplanes for bombers and reconnaissance machines is frequently disapproved by the British staff With



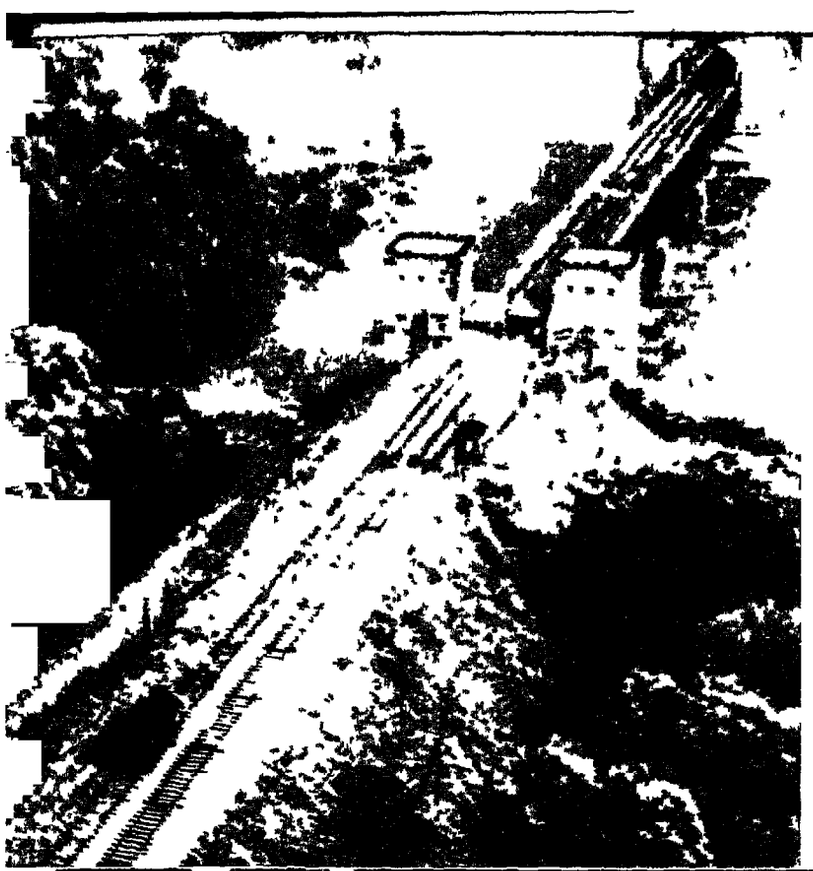




**FRENCH PILOTS' VICTORY OVER HEAVY ODDS**

Early in November, 1939 a spectacular air battle (typical of many fine exploits by the French Armee de l'Air) took place behind the Maginot Line between nine French fighters and 27 German 'planes Nine of the latter were brought down and all French 'planes returned safely Above, the remains of a Messerschmitt shot down, right, men who took part in the raid listening, in their quarters, to the official account of their victory

*Photos courtesy of the French Embassy*

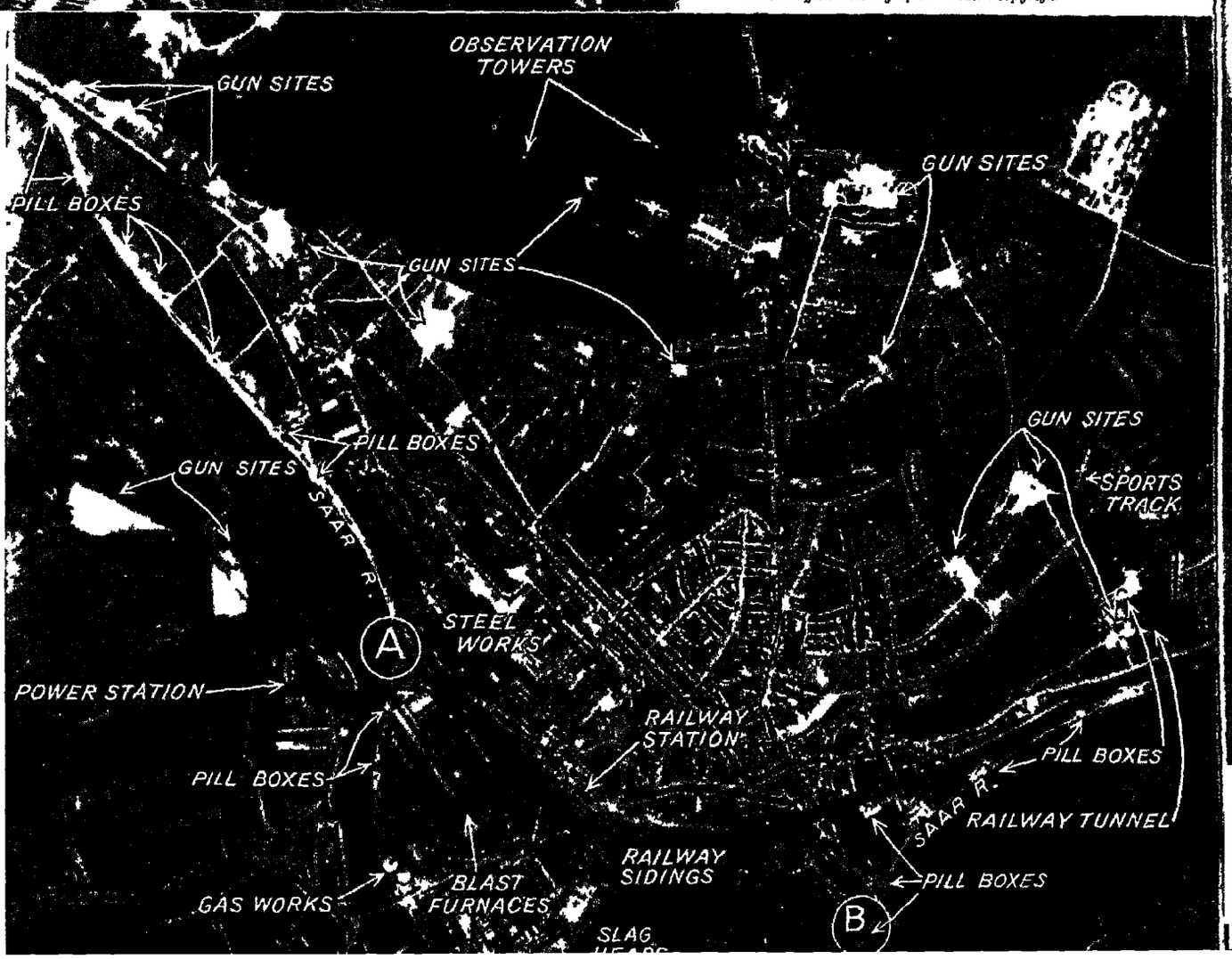




**'EYES' OF THE MODERN ARMY**

Some idea of the valuable work performed by the R A F is given in these photographs taken during reconnaissance flights Left, the approach to a railway bridge over the Rhine, showing closed gates at the bridgehead Above, a pontoon bridge over the Rhine The central portion is seen moored on the left of the near end Below, a remarkable picture of Voelklingen, six miles west of Saarbruecken. Distance between points A and B is about 1 mile

*British Official Photographs Crown copyright*

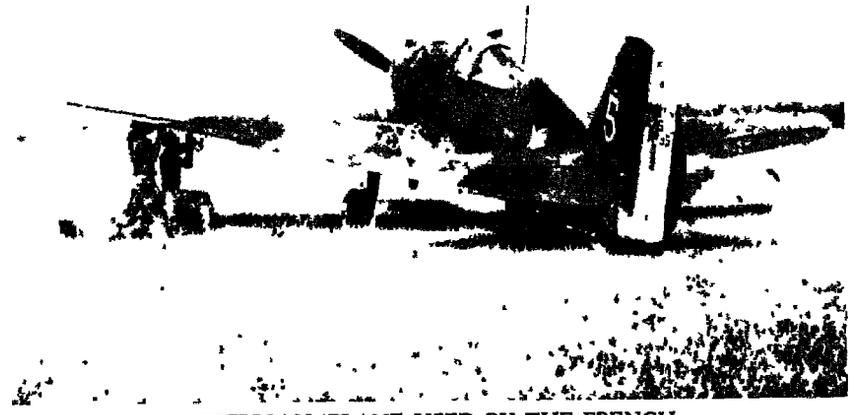




## GERMAN ALL-PURPOSE 'PLANE

Above is the Heinkel HE111K, used for bombing and reconnaissance. It has a transparent nose, and gun turrets above and below the fuselage. Its maximum speed is just over 300 m.p.h.

*Photo, Planet News*



## AMERICAN 'PLANE USED BY THE FRENCH

The Curtiss fighter, above is of a type ordered from America by the French Air Force It is driven by a Pratt and Whitney "Twin Wasp" engine, and can reach a speed of well over 300 m p h

*Photo, courtesy of the French Embassy*

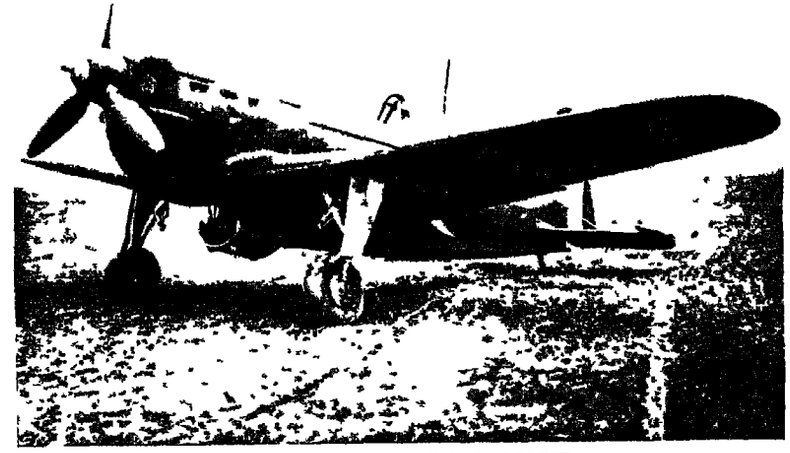




## GERMANY'S 'FLYING TORPEDO'

Sometimes called the "flying pencil," on account of its abnormally long body, the Dornier Do 17 has one gun turret above the fuselage, firing aft, and one in the nose. The Do 215 is a later pattern.

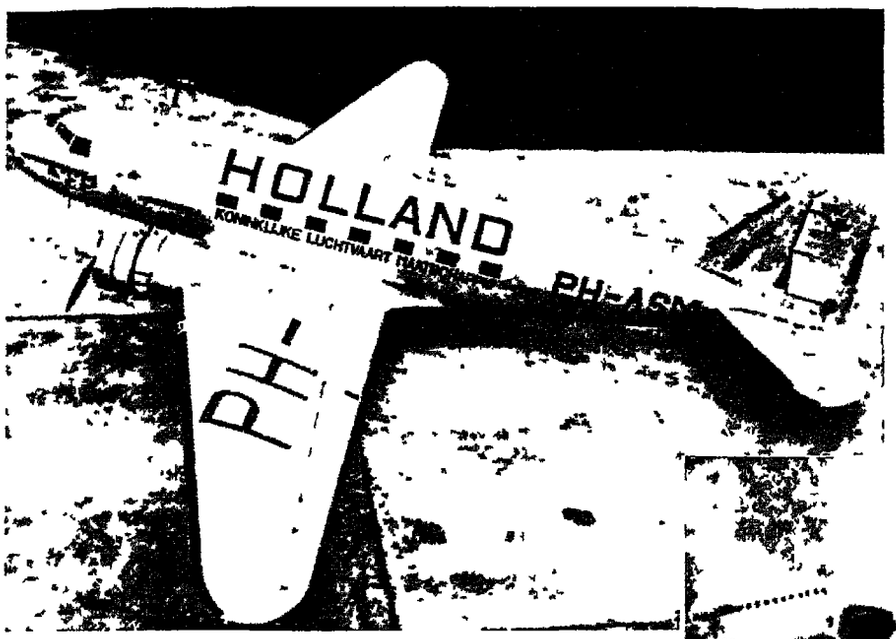
*Photo, Associated Press*



## BEARER OF A FAMOUS NAME

The Morane-Saulnier 405 is a fighter aircraft of the French Air Force, a low-wing monoplane, fitted with a "moteur-canon," or shell gun, firing through the airscrew boss.

*Photo, Planet News*






**NAZIS FIRE ON NEUTRAL 'PLANE**

**On September 26, 1939, the Dutch K.L.M. air liner, seen above, was fired on by a German warplane. Bullets struck the tail and body of this neutral 'plane, and a Swedish engineer was killed. On the right a mechanic is pointing out the holes made by the bullets from the German machine.**

*Photos, Wide World, Associated Press*

full air superiority it should be possible to send out reconnaissance machines and bombers without them being molested to any very serious extent. The idea is that the fighters are continuously sweeping the skies and engaging enemy fighters, so that the other types of aeroplane can operate without interference.

Some strategists hold that this kind of over-all air superiority is possible only when there is vast numerical preponderance, such as the Allies secured in the war of 1914 towards the end. At the outbreak of the war of 1939, in the view of most students of aviation, there was no marked Allied superiority in numbers over the Germans.

Two other aerial events must here be recorded. The first was on September 26, when a German military aeroplane attacked a K.L.M. Douglas D.C.3 air liner over the North Sea, and shot one passenger dead. It was fear of this kind of event that had led the British authorities at the outbreak of war to forbid all civil air transport operations by neutral countries to and from England. Subsequently, however, this prohibition was modified and, with proper safeguards, it was thought that air-lines might be restarted. As a result the London–Paris line, the Sabena line to Brussels, and a line to Scandinavia were restarted, as well as the K.L.M. line to London.

The other noteworthy aerial event was the breaking of parole by the British crew of a flying boat that had made a forced landing in Raufarhoefen, Iceland, on September 27. There was some misunderstanding about the parole, and the crew later flew to England. An inquiry was ordered by the Air Ministry and they were sent back to Iceland.

General inferences as to the qualities of the opposing air forces are that the Allies are better equipped. French Morane fighters and Curtiss fighters proved superior to German fighters on all occasions on which combat was secured on even terms. British fighters completely overwhelmed German bombers every time they made contact with them.

German bombers have been captured, and both the Heinkel 111 and the Dornier 17 types have been examined and checked against what was known of them before the war. They appear to be unmodified, and to be equipped still with nothing more formidable in the way of defensive armament than a single forward firing gun in the nose, and single guns in upper and lower positions aft of the wings. Nothing corresponding to the British power-operated turrets seems to have been developed to the stage of practical use as standard in the German squadrons as yet. Even the Messerschmitt fighter captured almost intact by the French was, according to report, the type with the lower-powered engine and four machine-guns. It was stated to have no cannon. It had been imagined that nearly all the Messerschmitts were equipped with the cannon firing forward in the line of flight through the air-screw shaft.

These facts led some observers to wonder at the end of this period of fighting whether the Germans were withholding part of their striking force for some as yet unexplained reason. It was clear before the war that many of the eulogistic accounts of German machines and of German technical superiority emanated from observers not fully competent to weigh up the position.

But it was certainly expected that the German aeroplanes would exhibit better qualities in combat than they showed during the first six weeks of the war. On the other hand, the determination and tenacity of the German crews was proved by the Firth of Forth raid, which was made at a distance of nearly 500 miles from the home base and in which the bombing attack was pr
home in spite of the excell
defences.

## *Historic Documents. L–LIII*

# *EARLY PROGRESS IN THE WAR AGAINST U-BOATS*

The Government's measures against the U-boat menace were first described by Mr. Churchill on September 26, 1939 (*see* page 94). We produce below further reports to the House of Commons, by him and by the Prime Minister, as week after week the campaign against the raiders intensified

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, OCTOBER 3 1939:

TRADE is flowing to and from our ports in an ever-increasing volume. As I speak, hundreds of vessels are moving over the great ocean routes. They are protected both by convoy and by the unremitting and relentless action of our anti-submarine forces.

Between September 11 and 20, 1,455 vessels of a gross tonnage of 3,670,000 tons entered or cleared the ports of the United Kingdom. During that period only 1·25 per cent of these ships and 1·75 per cent of the total tonnage was lost by U-boat attacks or by mines. No ship has been lost in convoy. Between September 20 and 24 three British ships, of an aggregate tonnage of 7,627 tons, were sunk by German submarines. Since then, that is to say, for a period of over a week, no British ship has been reported sunk by enemy submarine action. This may, in part, be due to the fact that the U-boats at sea at the beginning of the war are now being relieved by others putting out from German ports. But there is ample evidence that submarines are still operating round our coasts. The absence of sinkings, therefore, is, in the main, due to the successful measures adopted by the Navy.

The U-boats are being hunted from home waters, where our shipping must inevitably congregate, and where in consequence it is most vulnerable. German submarines, therefore, in their efforts to avoid our warships are being driven to operate in far distant waters

ANOTHER and more sinister development of the U-boat warfare is the announcement by Germany that she will regard every vessel of the British Merchant Navy as a warship. If this means anything, it means that she will pursue an unrestricted submarine campaign. The right to arm merchant ships for self-defence is one of the well-established principles of international law. Since the war commenced our merchant shipping has been subjected to attack without warning or in circumstances which put their crews in jeopardy by forcing them to take to the boats, often miles from land or rescue, a procedure directly contrary to international maritime law. These illegal attacks only serve to underline the importance of providing our shipping with adequate defensive equipment; and we are pressing on with this with the utmost dispatch.

Further evidence of unrestricted submarine warfare is to be found in the number of neutral merchant ships Germany has sunk. Since the outbreak of war the total of these sinkings amounts to seven ships, of a gross tonnage of 13,194. In addition, eight ships with a gross tonnage of 27,765 have been sunk by mines or bombing.

H.M. THE KING, IN A MESSAGE TO THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, HOME FLEET, OCTOBER 8:

I AM very glad to have had this early opportunity of visiting a portion of the Fleet and its Auxiliaries at the Northern base.

Having visited representative ships and establishments, I have been much impressed by the keen and cheerful spirit that unites you in a determination to bring the war to a successful conclusion. Your task may be long and arduous, but I have every confidence in your ultimate success.

Please convey to all those under your command my high appreciation of their efforts and my sincere good wishes for a safe return to their homes.

MR. CHURCHILL, IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, OCTOBER 17:

TOWARDS the end of last week the U-boat warfare, which had for a fortnight been mainly directed upon neutrals, became again intensified. Four ships, including two French ships, were sunk upon the western approaches during Saturday and Sunday, and three others were attacked but made their escape. The British ships sunk aggregated 13,000 tons.

On the other hand, it should not be supposed that all the losses are on one side. The Admiralty have hitherto refrained from giving the figures of the slaughter of U-boats which has been proceeding and is still proceeding with increasing severity.

On Friday last, for instance, four U-boats were certainly destroyed, including two of the largest and latest ocean-going U-boats in the German Navy. Nothing like this rate of destruction was attained at any moment in the last war. During the last week for which I can give figures, that is to say, to the end of the sixth week of the war, seven U-boats were sunk. If we look back over the whole period of six weeks since the war began we may estimate that 13 U-boats have been sunk, that five have been seriously damaged and possibly sunk, and several others damaged. These figures are probably an understatement. Besides this two-thirds of the U-boats which have been out raiding have suffered attack from depth-charges. . . . .

### Germany's Loss of Skilled Crews

WE believe, therefore, that out of about 60 U-boats ready for action at the beginning of the war about one-third have already been sunk or seriously damaged; and of the largest and latest ocean-going U-boats the proportion is at least one-fifth. We actually hold survivors from the crews of three vessels of this highest class.

We may thus take stock of the general position reached in the first six weeks of the U-boat war against British commerce. Something from a third to a quarter of the total U-boat fleet of Germany has been destroyed, and the gaps made in the skilled officers and crews cannot be speedily replaced. On the other hand, the British Mercantile Marine of 21,000,000 tons has experienced a loss of 156,000 tons by U-boat action, to which may be added 18,000 tons through mines or accidents—total 174,000 tons. During the same period we have captured from the enemy 20,000 tons, and have been refreshed by the arrival of new ships amounting to 104,000 tons. It will be seen, therefore, that while our mercantile marine remains practically unaffected by the U-boat warfare, losses have been inflicted upon the enemy which, if continued, could certainly not be endured.

I cannot close my examination of the first phase of this severe sea-struggle without inviting the House to realize the intensity of the effort and devotion which has been required from all the ever-increasing hunting craft and from those engaged upon convoys, not only in narrow waters but amid the storms of the oceans, and the constancy of the merchant officers and seamen who face all the hazards with buoyant and confident determination. I feel we may commend this part of our war business with some confidence to the House.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, OCTOBER 26.

IN the war at sea there has been an intensification of the German submarine campaign. This intensification we have always expected; but I can assure the House with confidence that the situation is well in hand. In spite of one or two strokes of good fortune, the enemy have not been able to attain the rate of sinking which they attained at the beginning of the war. Their submarines have been driven to operate farther and farther from their bases and farther and farther from the focal points where trade is bound to congregate. Finally, the destruction of enemy submarines is being maintained at a sufficiently high rate to encourage us to believe that this menace to our trade will eventually be overcome.

One feature of the enemy's U-boat campaign to which I must call attention is their growing lawlessness. It seems now to have become the rule for merchant ships to be sunk without warning. Frequently passengers and crew have been turned adrift in small open boats in stormy seas to suffer from cold and exposure. . . . No words are strong enough to express our detestation of this cowardly form of warfare.

Chapter 23

# THE SEA AFFAIR: KEEPING THE SEAS OPEN FOR BRITAIN'S FOOD SUPPLIES

*Vigilant Watch of the Navy: September Sinkings Halved—First Lord's Review of the Anti-Submarine Campaign—'Ark Royal' Story Refuted—Adventures of 'City of Flint'—Two Pocket Battleships at Large?—Loss of 'Royal Oak'—Epic Story of a British Submarine—Contraband Control System*

DURING a period of warfare marked by little activity on land the British Navy maintained its supremacy at sea, countering the German attempt to paralyse British sea-borne trade by submarine, aircraft or raider action. The vigilant watch of the Navy, supplemented by its air arm, with help from the R.A.F., succeeded during the month of October 1939 in halving the number of casualties that had been sustained by submarine action in September. Thus in September enemy naval action accounted for the loss of 37 ships, totalling 155,636 tons. During October enemy sinkings amounted to 83,159 tons, accounted for by the loss of 19 ships. It was estimated that the entire loss did not come to more than 1½ per cent of the total British tonnage afloat during this period.

During the war of 1914–18, for two years the tonnage lost monthly by enemy action never fell below 300,000; and during the period when the U-boats and raiders had the upper hand on the high seas it was not unusual for the monthly figures to reach the alarming total of 900,000 tons. Then, indeed, it was necessary for Great Britain to look anxiously at her rationing system and to tighten her belt against the threat of starvation. The return of every food-bearing ship was eagerly awaited, for at times the stock in the national larder grew perilously low.

At the end of October 1939, after only two months of war, it seemed apparent that no intensification of the German sea campaign was likely to reduce Great Britain once again to such a sorry plight. The British navy, intact but for one or two major losses which it would be foolish to belittle, had proved that no enemy action could disturb her supremacy of the seas. Grievous losses had been inflicted on the U-boat fleet, the full extent of which was not officially revealed. It was, however, authoritatively estimated that at the end of October 1939 at least 30 per cent of the German submarine effectives had been either sunk or disabled and, as has been many times pointed out by Mr. Winston Churchill and others, this did not mean merely a proportion of valuable submarine vessels lost to the enemy, but also the irreparable loss of the expert officers and crews who led the vanguard of the German attack on British shipping.

**The 'Blitzkrieg' Bluff**

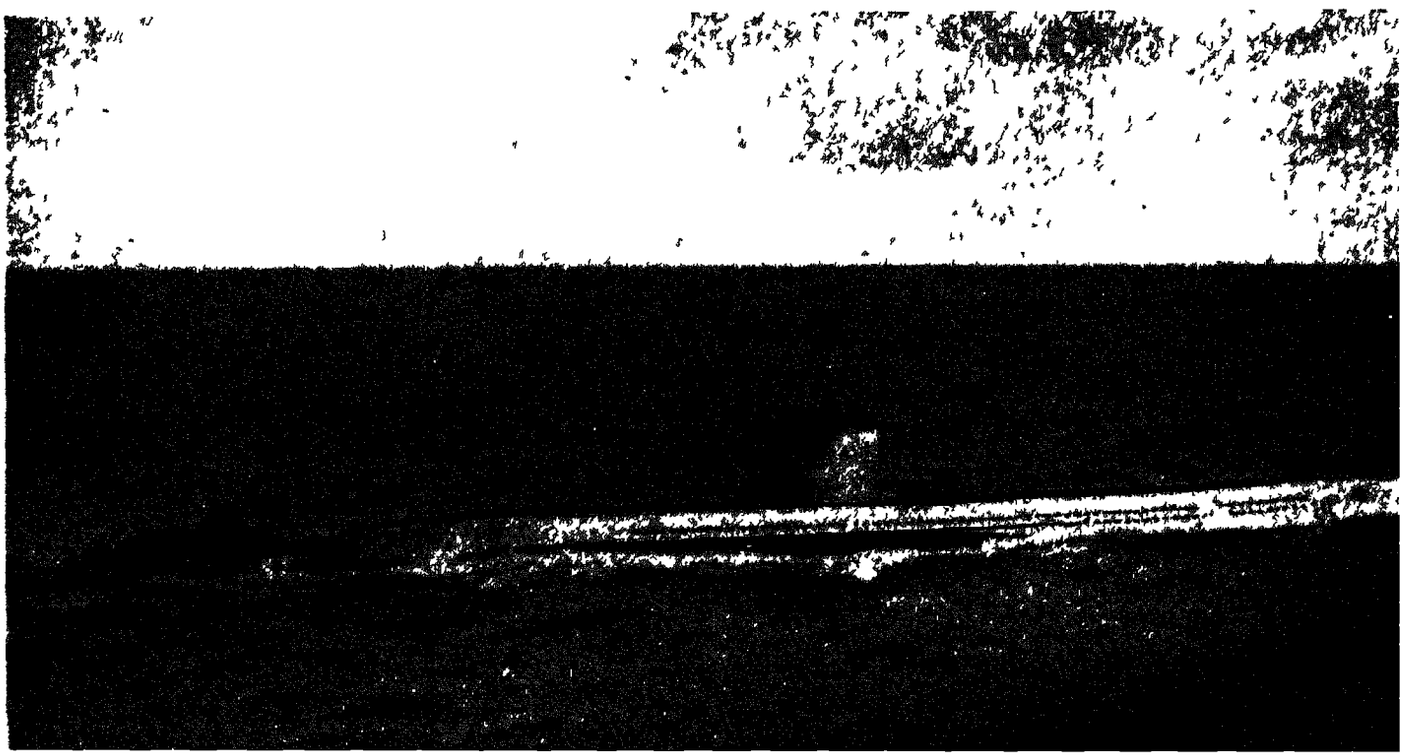
During the progress of a war it is never easy to estimate the underlying strategy of the enemy. It is indeed essential that he should disguise it by every feint and deception in his power. But Hitler, with his promise to his people of a "Blitzkrieg," must have counted confidently on the devastating damage which would be wreaked on British shipping during the first weeks. The gradual whittling down of his submarine forces and the diminishing effect of their campaign must have been a bitter blow to his hopes, for the flower of his personnel and the most powerful of his submarines were sacrificed in the first Great attempts to reduce Britain by blockade.

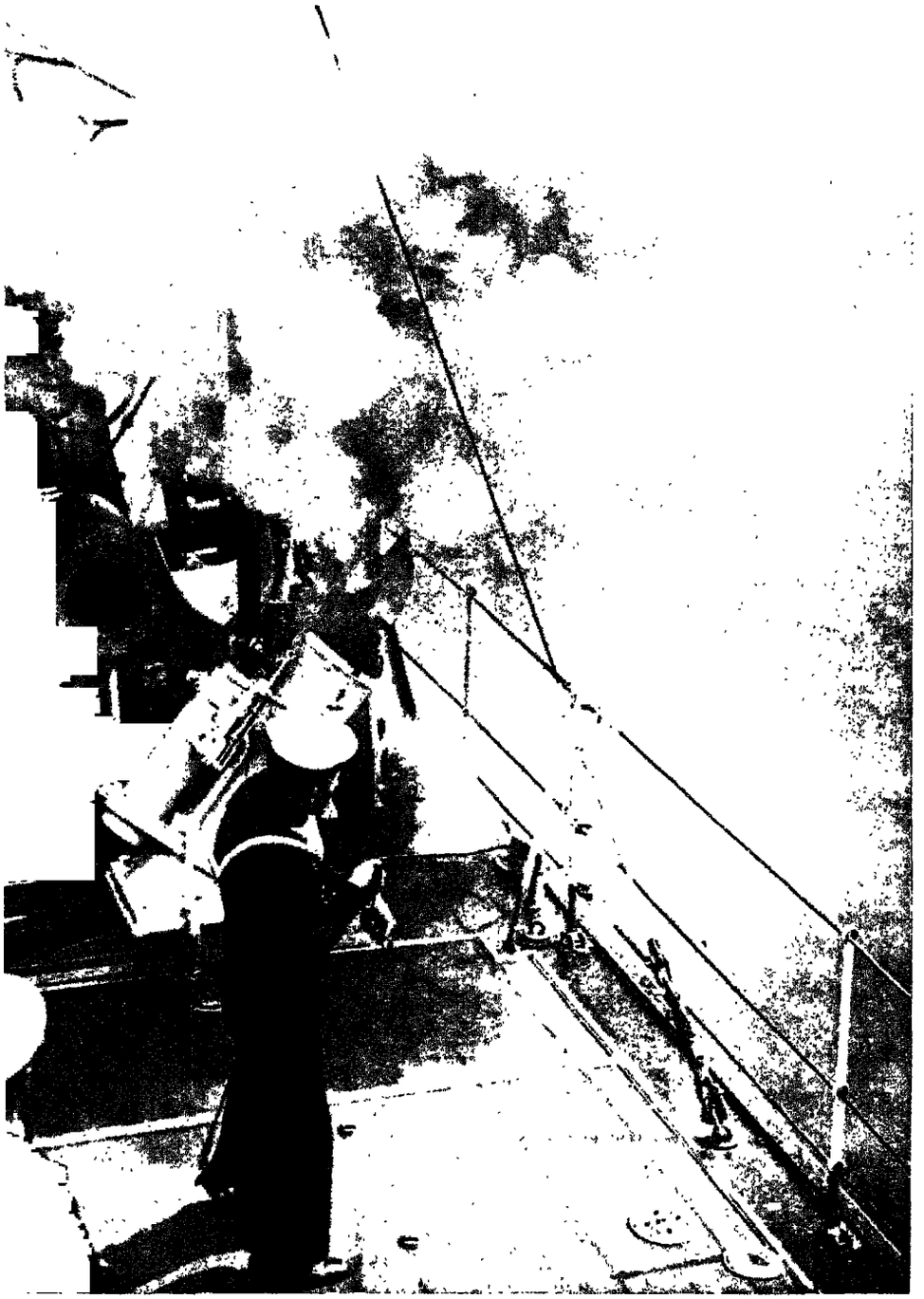
As the war pursued its uneventful course on land it became clearer every

**CLOSE-UP OF A NAZI SUBMARINE**

**The ocean-going U-boat seen below was photographed from the Norwegian freighter "Ida Banke" off Cape Clear, on the southern coast of Ireland. The U-boat's officers are directing the neutral vessel to pick up the crew of two British ships which they have just sunk**

*Photo, Associated Press*





**HURLING DEATH AT THE U-BOATS**

**This photograph illustrates one of the methods used by the Royal Navy for dropping the depth charges which proved such an efficacious method of destroying hostile submarines. The deadly weapon is thrown overboard from the species of mortar shown above.**

*Photo, Central Press*

day that the silent service of the Navy was each week making substantial contributions to a state of affairs which must eventually become the prelude to Allied victory.

Speaking on October 17, the First Lord of the Admiralty made one of his official pronouncements in the House of Commons on the progress of war at sea. He pointed out that the Admiralty had hitherto refrained from giving the figures of the destruction of U-boats, which had been proceeding and was still proceeding with increasing severity. He quoted the results of one day (the Friday of the previous week), when he said four U-boats were certainly destroyed, including two of the largest and latest of the ocean-going submarines in the German Navy. Mr. Churchill added that nothing like this rate of destruction was attained in the war of 1914–18.

With his customary caution the First Lord said that, in his estimate, during the first six weeks of war thirteen U-boats had been sunk, five seriously damaged and possibly sunk, and several others damaged. Two-thirds of the U-boats which had been out raiding had suffered from attack by depth charges. He refrained from giving any indication of such losses that might have been inflicted by the French fleet, beyond saying that the French, too, had certainly taken their toll. Summing up, he said that it was believed that out of about 60 U-boats ready for action at the beginning of the war about one-third had already been sunk or seriously damaged, and of the largest and latest ocean-going U-boats at least one-fifth.

In effect, something from a third to a quarter of the total U-boat fleet of Germany had been destroyed in the first six weeks of war, and gaps made among the skilled officers and crews which could not speedily be filled. Of the 21,000,000 tons of the British Mercantile Marine, we had lost by U-boat action, mines or accident 174,000 tons; and during the same period we had captured from the enemy 29,000 tons. Our own tonnage had been supplemented by the arrival of new ships amounting to 104,000 tons. The position, Mr. Churchill said, was that while our Mercantile Marine remained practically unaffected by the U-boat warfare, losses had been inflicted on the enemy which, if continued, could certainly not be endured.

**Six Weeks' Figures**

In conclusion, the First Lord paid a tribute to "the intensity of the effort and devotion which has been required from all the ever-increasing hunting craft and from those engaged upon convoy—not only in narrow waters but amid the storms of the oceans—and the constancy of the merchant officers and seamen who face all the hazards with buoyant and confident determination." He further said that he would like to match against the German fleet a force composed only of ships of the British Navy which the enemy claimed they had sunk.

One of the most important of these vessels was the aircraft carrier "Ark Royal," which was alleged to have been the victim of a German aerial attack on Tuesday, September 26, and to have been sent to the bottom. Unfortunately for the German propagandists who loudly announced this claim hour after hour and day after day, adding to their tale an unnamed British cruiser, there happened to be an unimpeachable neutral witness to the contrary. This was Captain A. G. Kirk, U.S. Naval Attaché at the American Embassy in London, who spent the week-end following that date as a guest of Admiral



by twenty German aircraft. No damage was done to the British ships, none of which was hit. Two German aircraft were shot down and a third was badly damaged. Some of the crew of one shot down were rescued by a destroyer after they had taken to a rubber boat. It turned out that the British squadron was covering the movements of a damaged British submarine—that same vessel, in fact, whose thrilling adventures are recounted later in this chapter—and it was while our warships were thus hampered that the German aircraft had launched an attack. In naval circles the fact that this determined enemy raid had been so successfully beaten off was held to show very clearly the limitations of bombing attack upon warships, about which so much controversy had raged in recent years.

Sir Charles Forbes, commanding the British Home Fleet.

After his visit Captain Kirk made his routine report to the Navy Department in America, in which he said that he was present at the regular church services in the "Ark Royal" and observed all the normal Sunday routine of the Fleet. Captain Kirk saw all the ships of the Fleet in perfect condition and in no way damaged by air attack. No ship had been hit by bombs and no casualties had been received. Yet from September 27 until October 2 twenty-seven wireless broadcasts claimed this victory. On October 4 the Prime Minister ridiculed these "reiterated misstatements."

**Nazi Lie Exposed**

"The Germans," he said, "have claimed the sinking of the aircraft carrier 'Ark Royal,' later changed to 'Glorious' or even 'Furious'—and severe damage to battleships without loss to themselves. The facts are that no British ship was damaged and that all of them, the 'Ark Royal' included, are carrying out their normal duties sublimely unconscious of these rumours."

Mr. Chamberlain added:

"The only casualties incurred in that action were suffered by the German aircraft themselves. Four of the crew of these aircraft are prisoners in our hands."

On September 26 there occurred an unsuccessful German aerial attack on a squadron of the Home Fleet in the North Sea, about 150 miles from Norway. The squadron included capital ships, an aircraft carrier, a cruiser and destroyers. This, the first enemy air attack on the Fleet, was carried out from a considerable height



**NAZI IMAGINATION—BRITISH REALITY**

Above is a drawing from the "Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung," purporting to depict a German air attack on British ships in the North Sea. A bomb is exploding on an aircraft carrier, which is doubtless intended to represent the "Ark Royal," so often "sunk" by the German wireless. Top, a photograph showing "Ark Royal" carrying out her duties "somewhere at Sea."

About this time it became clear that the German offensive at sea was not solely confined to their U-boats. On October 3 it was announced that the British (Booth Line) steamer "Clement" had been sunk in the South Atlantic by an enemy ship. It was afterwards established that this was the work of one of two German "pocket" battleships which had managed to remain at large on the high seas. The existence of these formidable armed raiders abroad in neutral waters was confirmed by Captain J. H. Gainard of the American-owned "City of Flint," challenged on October 9 by a flag signal from the "Deutschland." He was ordered to take aboard the rescued crew of the British steamer "Stonegate." A German prize crew was put aboard the "City of Flint," which was taken first to the Norwegian port of Tromsoe, and later put into Murmansk (U.S.S.R.). Ordered to "move on" by the Russian authorities, she returned to Tromsoe and after a few hours' stay was escorted away by a Norwegian warship. The subsequent adventures of the vessel ended by summary action on the part of the Norwegian authorities when she got to Haugesund; there the German prize crew was interned and Captain Gainard was told in effect that he was free to do what he pleased. (A full story of this episode is given in Chapter 28.)

These comparatively trivial incidents seemed to show that there were two German "pocket" battleships at large which might become a serious menace to British shipping; but during the long period at their disposal they had up to this time achieved little in the way of destruction. "This fresh menace," said the Prime Minister, "will be dealt with according to pre-arranged plans." It was further announced that only two ships, aggregating 10,000 tons, had so far been sunk—compared with 212,000 lost by U-boat action.

On October 14, in the early hours of the morning, the British Navy suffered a serious and a humiliating loss. The battleship "Royal Oak" was sunk at anchor in Scapa Flow by a U-boat. It was characteristic of Mr. Winston Churchill (whose humorous sallies at the enemy made each of his official statements a delight to his listeners) that in his first announcement to the House of Commons he paid a tribute to the officers and crew of the German submarine responsible for this great tragedy.

"When we consider," he said, "that during the whole course of the last war this anchorage was found to be immune from such attacks on account of the obstacles imposed by the currents and the net barrages, this entry by a U-boat must be considered a remarkable exploit of professional skill and daring."

Some weeks later, with more facts in his possession, he made a statement to the House which clearly revealed that the defences of Scapa Flow were not in that state of strength and efficiency required to make the anchorage absolutely proof (as it should have been) against sub-marine attack. Fully accepting any blame that might lie on him as First Lord, he agreed that an undue degree of risk had been accepted both by the Admiralty and the Fleet; but, as he pointed out, many risks are accepted inevitably by the Fleet and by the Admiralty as part of the regular routine of keeping the seas, and those risks unadvisedly run at Scapa Flow seemed to highly competent persons no greater than many others.

**Churchill on the 'Royal Oak'**

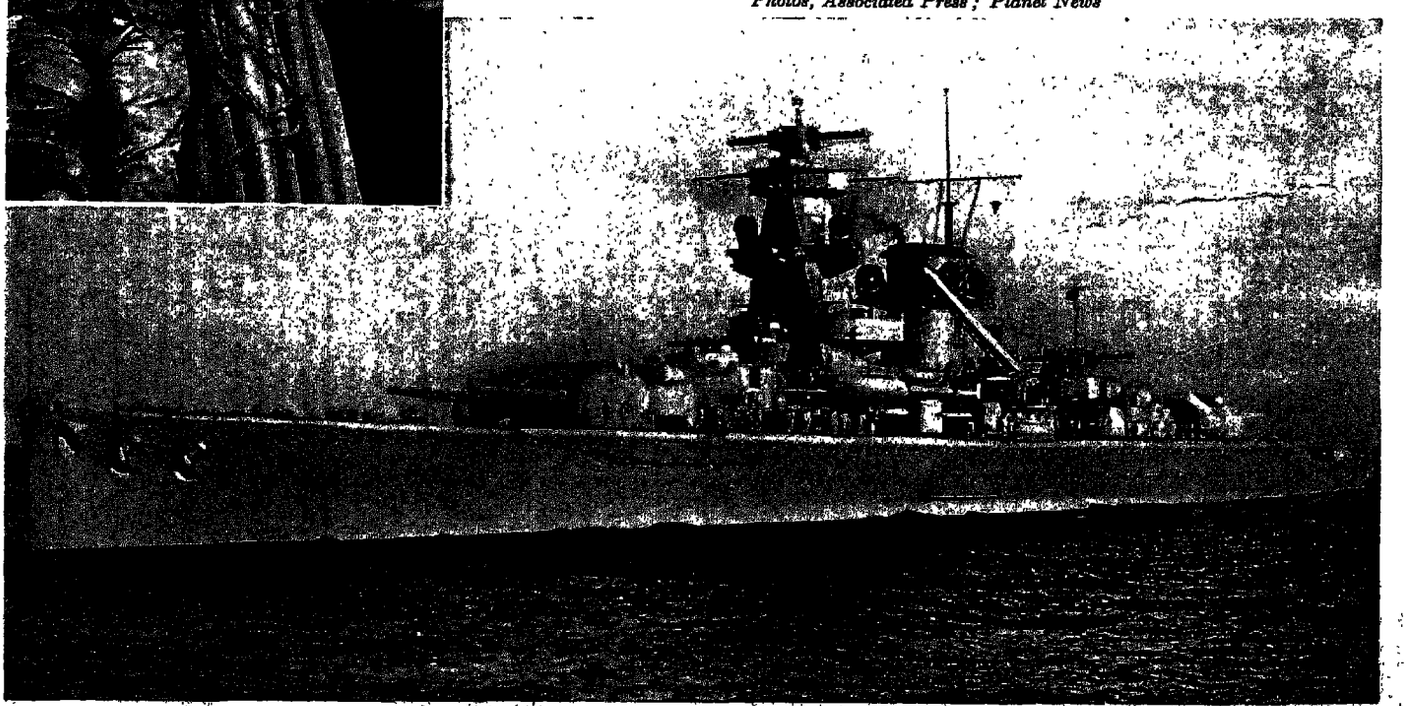
When the "Royal Oak" was torpedoed and sent to the bottom with the loss of 800 officers and men, so far



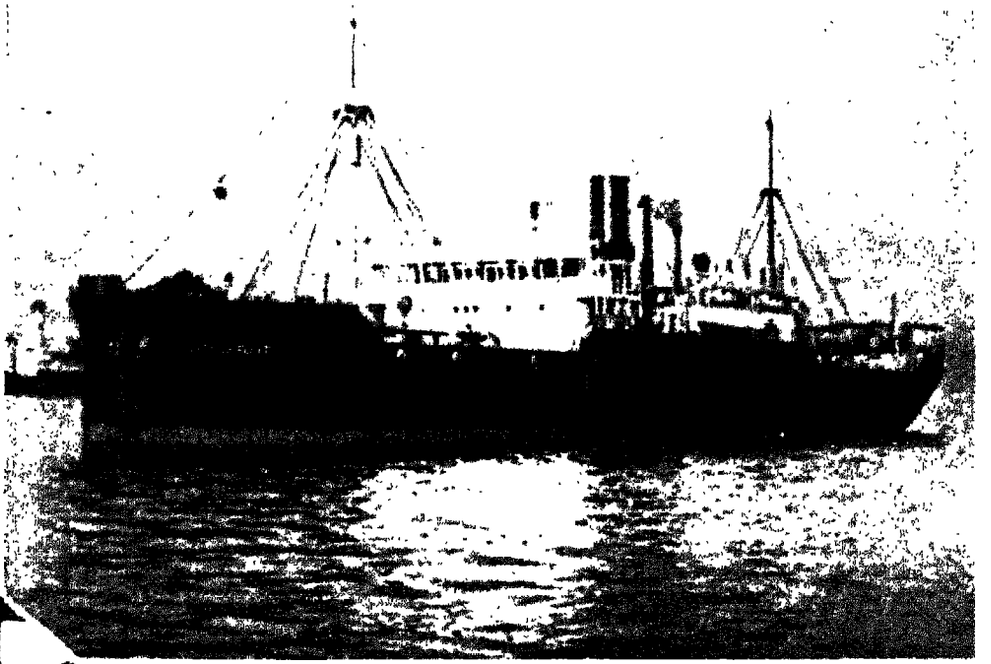
### ARMED RAIDER AND HER VICTIMS

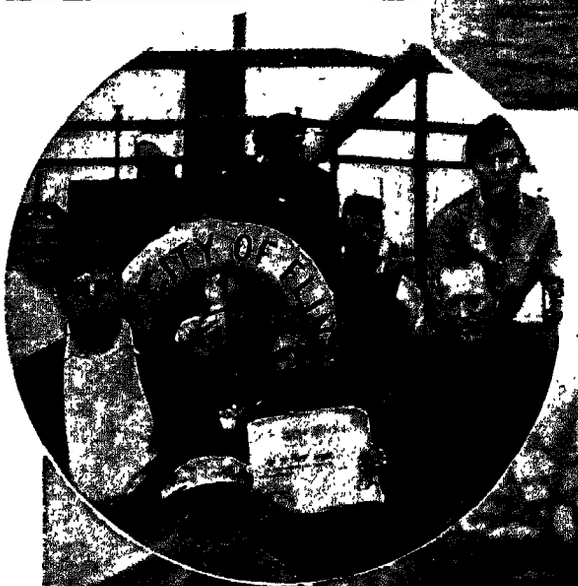
**On the left are some of the crew of the British steamer "Clement," sunk by an armed German raider in the South Atlantic. They were photographed on board the Brazilian steamer "Itatinga," which rescued them and took them to Bahia. The raider was thought to have been the German "pocket" battleship "Admiral Scheer," seen below.**

*Photos, Associated Press; Planet News*







## 'CITY OF FLINT'S' LONG AND ADVENTUROUS JOURNEY

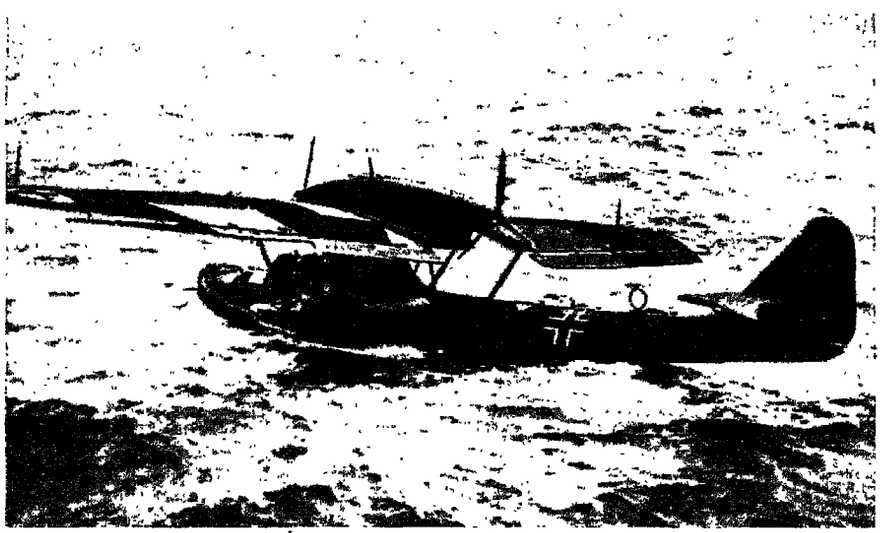
**On October 9, 1939, the American-owned "City of Flint" (above) was seized by the German battleship "Deutschland" and brought by a prize crew into Kola Bay, north of Murmansk. Later she put in at Tromsoe and at Haugesund, where the prize crew was interned by the Norwegian authorities. On the left, members of the crew are seen at Bergen, after the ship had been freed, and below are the interned German prize crew. The map shows the ship's journey.**

*Photos, Keystone; Planet News; Associated Press*



was it from the mind of those in command that the ship had been the subject of a submarine attack that they were taking precautions against a bombardment from the air, or alternatively examining the possibility of an internal explosion.

Apart from the tragic loss of life, the Navy mourned the disappearance of a ship which, though old, had great value. The "Royal Oak" was laid down in 1914 and cost £2,468,269. She had a displacement of 29,150 tons and bore a normal complement of about 1,000 men. She carried eight 15-inch guns, twelve 6-inch guns, eight 4-inch anti-aircraft guns and one 12-pounder, as well as torpedo tubes and smaller armament. During the war of 1914–18 she was in action at the Battle of Jutland; and she had been hit by an anti-aircraft



GERMAN RAIDER LAID LOW

**One of the German seaplanes brought down during the course of the air attack on ships of the British Fleet on October 9, 1939, is pictured here. The crew of the Nazi aircraft, seen preparing to launch their rubber boat, were picked up by a British destroyer.**

*Photo, Central Press*

shell during the Spanish civil war. In March 1934 she was transferred to dockyard control and her repairs were estimated to have cost £1,000,000. Her defence was supposed to have been particularly strong against under-water attack. Among the 24 officers lost was Rear-Admiral Blagrove, who was 52 years of age and had had 37 years' service in the Navy.

A necessary publicity was given to the feats of German submarines which achieved such successes as the sinking of the "Royal Oak" and the "Courageous," and their miserable toll of merchant ships both British and neutral was recorded. The invaluable work of the submarines of the Royal Navy, on the other hand, was accomplished without much trumpeting in the public press. There was published in the early days of October, however, an account of the adventure of a British submarine which had been the subject of enemy attacks in the North Sea. This ship had set out from her British base on patrol duty with a full gale blowing, and after a hazardous journey, in which she had to dive several times to avoid observation, she arrived at her station by night and lay on the bottom just before dawn.

Soon afterwards a depth charge exploded not far away, followed during the next hour by six more. During the following hour they averaged one every two minutes. Later came an attack by sweep wires and electrically fired charges as well as depth charges. One of these towed charges which exploded caused so great a shock that all lights were extinguished, and leaks were started in the hull. The high-pressure air service was disorganized, and both main engines and one main motor were put out of action.

Conditions in the submarine became hourly more intolerable, and at nightfall the lieutenant in command decided to bring his ship to the surface and take a risk against an enemy rather than face a slow death by suffocation. By great good fortune the vessel was brought up, and there was by this time no enemy in sight. But the ship was in a sad state.

The wireless had been smashed, the engines were out of action, and should the enemy have appeared it would have been impossible to dive again. However, by the most heroic efforts the engines were got going again, and the wireless repaired. In answer to an appeal for help, an escort of warships was sent to meet her, and though (as told earlier in this chapter) enemy aircraft made an attack on the squadron covering her movements, the gallant little under-water craft reached her home port in safety.

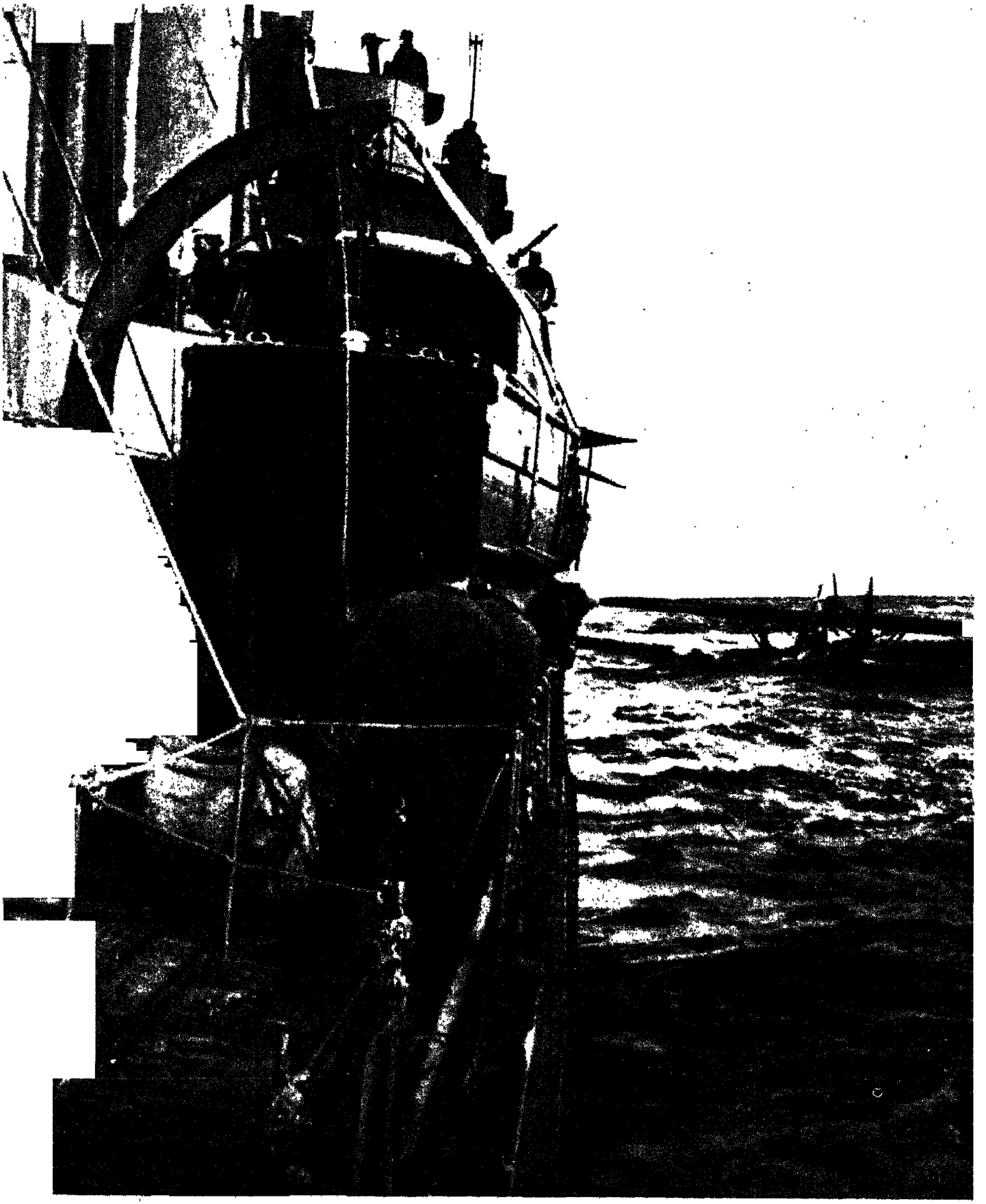
This story might be matched by many of German submarines hunted and disabled. There is one such account, vouched for officially, of British destroyers on an independent search for submarines in northern waters. The weather was unfavourable, with visibility barely seven miles. There came the report that a submarine had been sighted some distance to the southward, and the destroyers steamed off in the direction indicated. They picked up the scent and the hunt began. Depth charge after depth charge was dropped—terrible missiles described as "massive canisters about the size of ordinary dustbins." Their explosion sent up great spouts of water and shook the ships from which they were projected—but even so a second atttack was necessary before the destruction of the prey could be assured.

Then, about half a mile astern of one of the destroyers, the conning tower and long hull of a submarine suddenly broke surface. Her stern was still under water when her conning tower lid opened and men started to tumble up on deck. Some leapt overboard. Others held up their hands. Destroyers approached and boats were lowered. The whole German crew were rescued, some from the water and some from the submarine itself. They were taken aboard the destroyers, where they were given Navy rum and warm clothing.

**How a U-Boat Sank**

The crew's description of their experiences tallies in detail with that of the crew of the British submarine related above. First, they heard the sound of the hunting destroyers' propellers becoming louder and louder; then the thudding detonation of the first depth charges coming nearer and nearer. This first attack damaged the submarine badly, but the second put out lights, shattered the ship's instruments and caused bad flooding. The U-boat's stern soon became full of water, and she developed a heavy list. The compressed air was leaking, and the German commander decided to use the remaining pressure to blow the tanks and come to the surface. Very shortly after the rescue of the crew the submarine sank stern first.

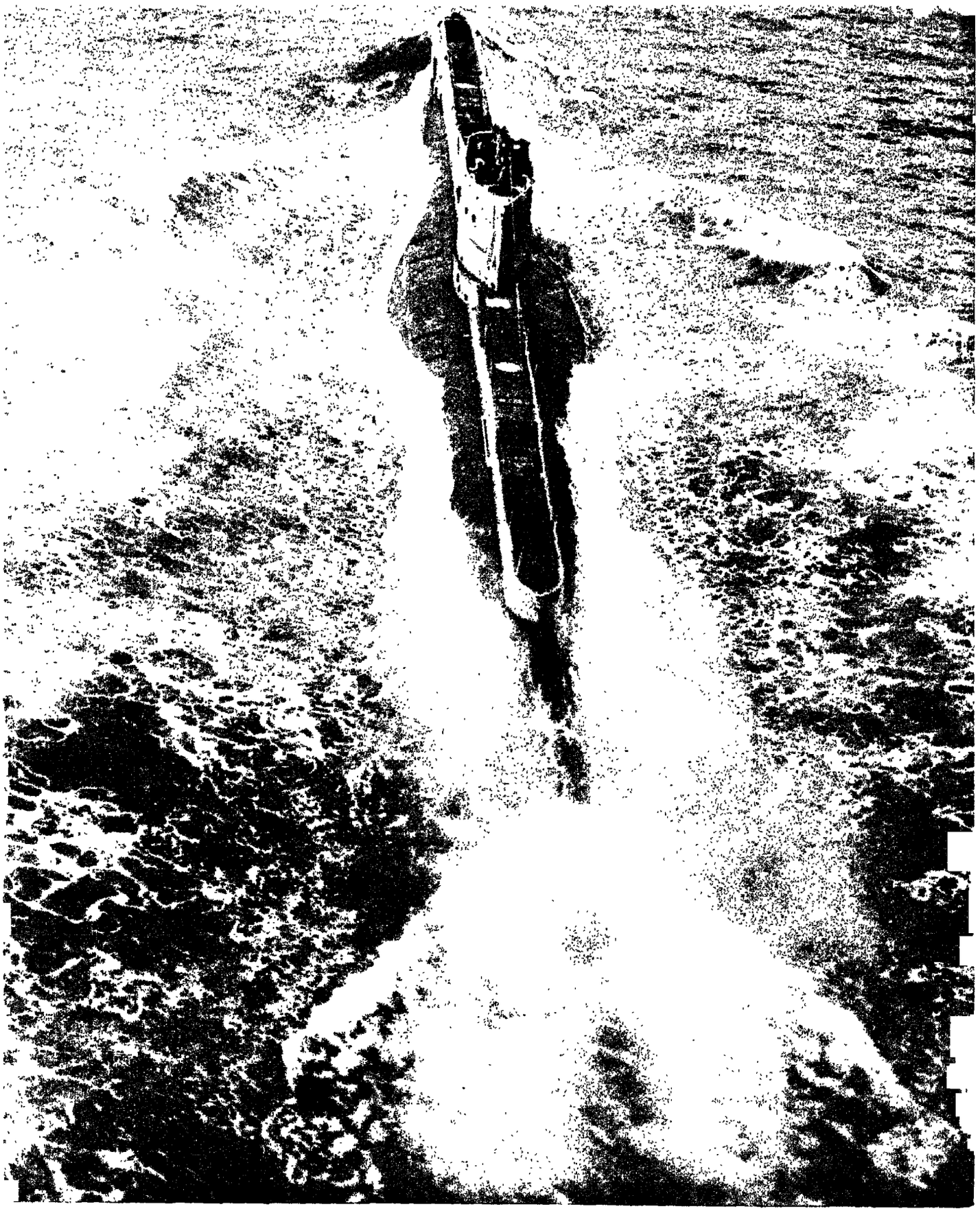
During the period under review the Navy had to face several menacing



ROYAL NAVY SUCCOURS A VANQUISHED FOE

On October 9, 1939, there were repeated actions in the North Sea between German aircraft and British warships, but though over a hundred bombs were dropped, none found their mark. Above, the crew of one of the German aircraft brought down is being rescued by a British destroyer, from the deck of which the photograph was taken.

*Photo, Central Press*

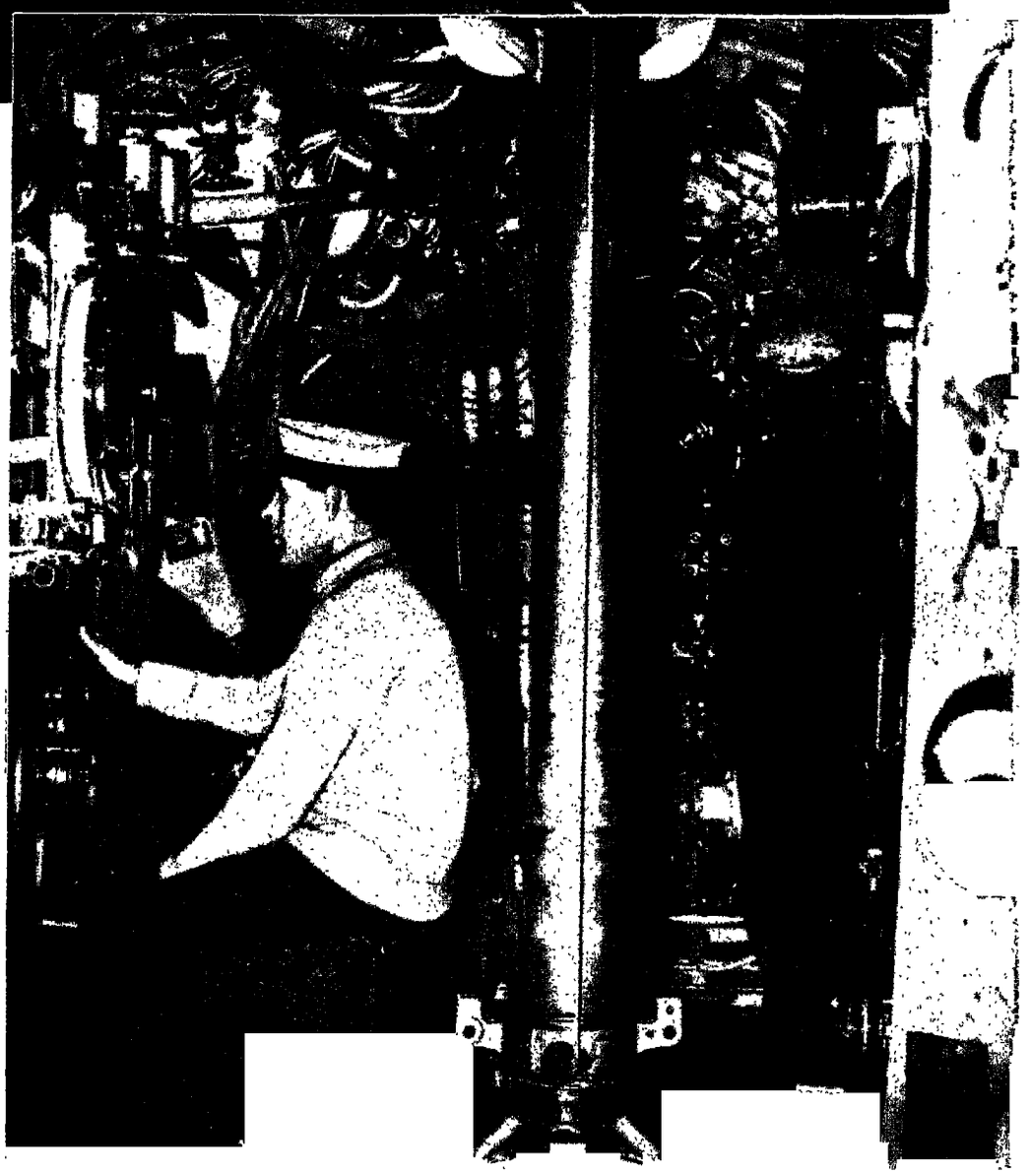


LONE UNIT OF BRITAIN'S NAVAL MIGHT

Whereas the wide stretches of the oceans were covered with British shipping, which provided targets for enemy U-boats, the German flag was practically swept from the seas on the outbreak of war. But Britain's submarines still maintained their vigilant patrols, and the photograph above, taken from the air, shows one of them returning to her base.

*Photo, Central Press*





## ALONE IN A WORLD OF THEIR OWN

These photographs give some idea of the cramped conditions of life in a modern submarine, where every available inch of space is utilized. Above are seen officers and crew at the controls ; the officer in a white sweater is looking into the periscope. On the right a man is seated at the hydroplane controls, which regulate the submerging of the submarine. The periscope (centre) has been pulled down.

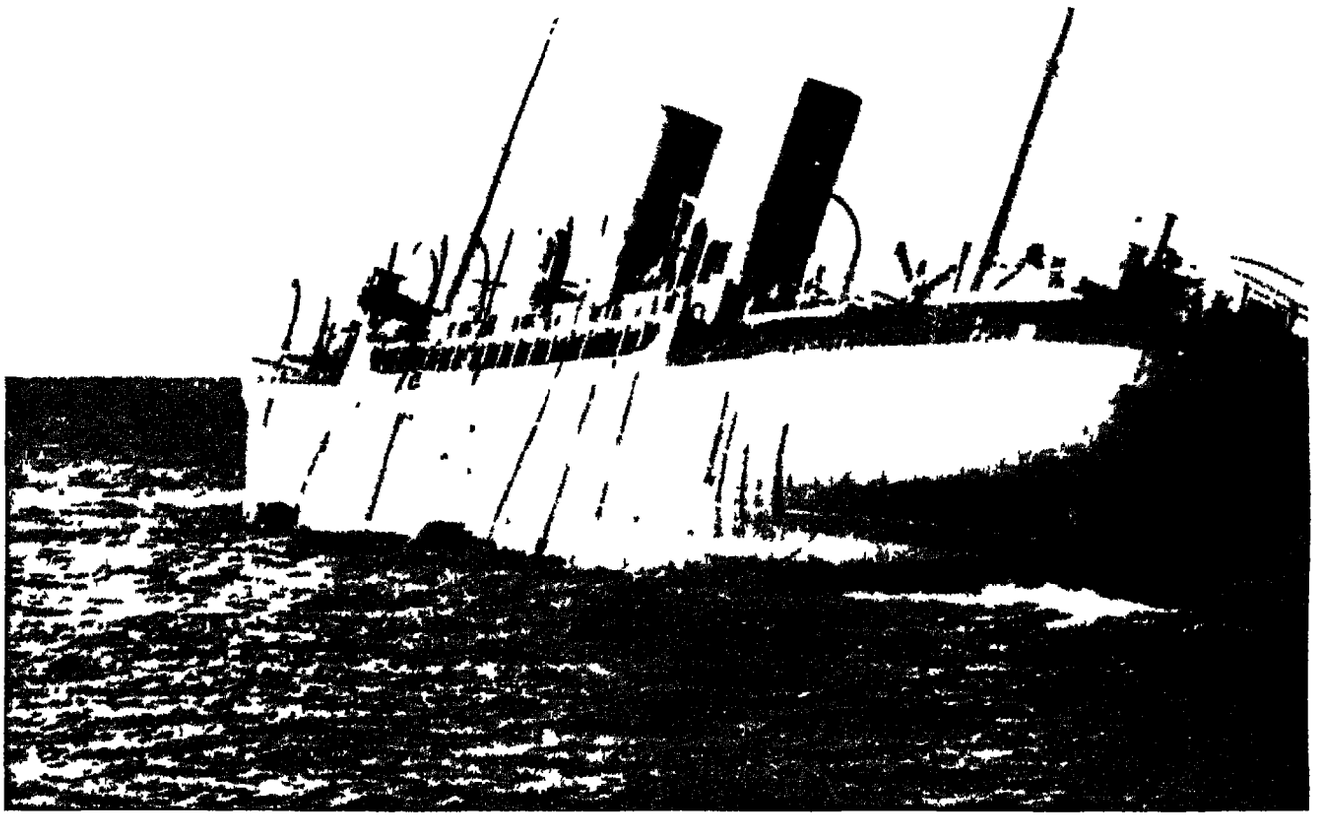
*Photos, Fox ; Sport & General*



*British Official Photograph Crown copyright*

**THE BOARD OF ADMIRALTY IN SESSION**

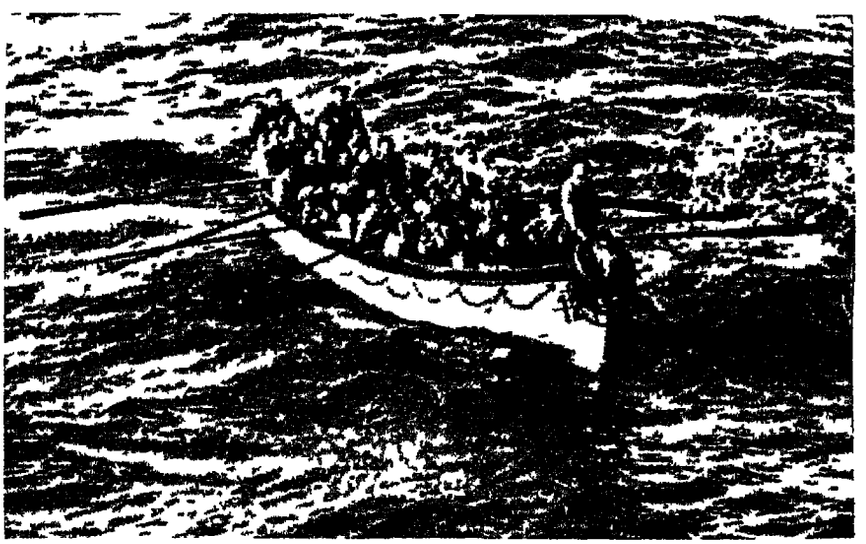
Here, assembled in the Board Room at the Admiralty, are seen members of the Board in special session Sitting around the table are, from left to right, Mr Geoffrey Shakespeare (Parliamentary and Financial Secretary), Rear-Admiral H M Burrough (Asst Chief of Naval Staff), Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Ramsay (Fifth Sea Lord, retired November 1939) Rear-Admiral T S V Phillips (Deputy Chief of Naval Staff), Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound (First Sea Lord), Sir J S Barnes (Deputy Secretary), Rt Hon Winston Churchill (First Lord of the Admiralty), Sir Archibald Carter (Secretary to the Admiralty), Admiral Sir Charles Little (Second Sea Lord), Rear-Admiral B A Fraser (Third Sea Lord and Controller) Rear-Admiral G S Arbuthnot (Fourth Sea Lord) and Captain A U M Hudson (Civil Lord)



FRENCH VICTIM OF A NAZI U-BOAT

On October 14, 1939 the French liner ' Bretagne " (10,108 tons), with 125 passengers on board, was sunk by a U-boat Seven persons were killed and many injured Above, the " Bretagne," listing badly, shortly before she sank , below some of the survivors in one of the ship's lifeboats

*Photos Planet News*



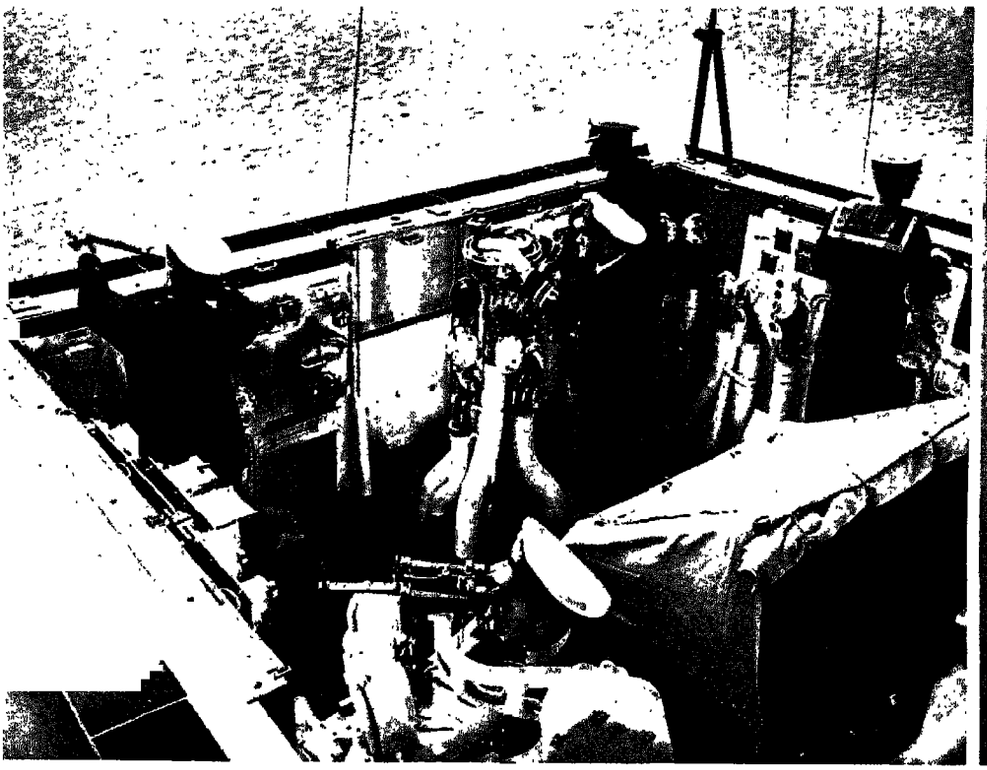
attacks from the air On October 14 twelve German aircraft attacked a British convoy in the North Sea. They were at once engaged by British fighters and escort vessels, and it was at first announced that four of them had been brought down No British aircraft suffered any casualties and no ship of the convoy or escort was damaged The attack was a determined one, for the German bombers first made their appearance in the morning, were sighted and driven off , they returned in the afternoon and were once more driven off after a desperate fight To the first list of enemy machines destroyed there were later added at least three more aeroplanes which it was conclusively proved could never have returned home

During the latter part of September and in October the convoy system increased in efficiency and strength, proving once again how great a protection it could afford to merchant shipping

In regard to the convoy system Mr Churchill now made one reservation He said that at first it must necessarily impose a delay upon the movement of shipping which amounted in fact to a reduction of its carrying capacity. These delays were expected to be diminished greatly as the system came into full use and habit The first two months, therefore, afforded no true measure of the degree of restriction which convoys imposed He added, in praise of the magnificent service of the Navy and its auxiliaries

" When we contemplate the difficulty of carrying on in full activity our vast processes of commerce, and the need of being prepared at a hundred points and on a thousand occasions in the teeth of the kind of severe attack to which we are being subjected, I feel that credit is due to the many thousands of persons who in every quarter of the globe are contributing to the achievement, and especially to the central machinery and direction which is in fact holding the seas free as they have never been at any time in any war in which we have been engaged "

Amongst the most favourable features of the early months of naval warfare were the consistently encouraging reports of the quantity of contraband consigned to enemy uses wh[illegible] been captured By early N[illegible] over 400,000 tons of [illegible] to Germany had be[illegible]





## TRAGIC LOSS OF THE 'ROYAL OAK'

**The sinking of the "Royal Oak," torpedoed by a German submarine on October 14, 1939, entailed the loss of 810 lives. Among those killed was Rear-Admiral H. E. C. Blagrove (portrait as a captain, top right). The scene on the bridge of the vessel (above) and the photograph of the ship (below) were taken a few days before she was torpedoed. On the right, men are seen reading the list of survivors posted up in a naval port.**

*Photos, Sport & General; Keystone; Fox; Associated Press*





A full account of the working of the Contraband Control is given in Chapter 30. As there related, three bases were established in British waters and two in the Mediterranean. There is little that is spectacular in this great service of the Navy which in eight weeks alone deprived the Germans of 87,540 tons of petroleum products, including 12,000,000 gallons of petrol. There is little of the romance of the sea in shepherding the harmless neutral to the port of search, nor was the personnel particularly numerous. The base at Weymouth was staffed by thirty-five naval officers and about eighty ratings. Attached were two examination steamers on patrol day and night outside the bay, and three Lowestoft drifters to take off the boarding parties. The Mercantile Marine experience of the Royal Naval Reserve was called into service in this work, and many of the officers and men were drawn from this branch.

**Contraband Control**

With reference to Mr. Churchill's statement that the chaser fleet engaged in hunting submarines was being increased threefold, something has been revealed of the types of vessels which were enlisted in this service. Trawlers, of course, formed a large proportion, but it was not generally known that a great number of pleasure ships had also been requisitioned. Famous yachts—from the floating palaces of millionaires to humbler privately owned craft—were painted grey and sent out on auxiliary services, and performed their duties with conspicuous success.

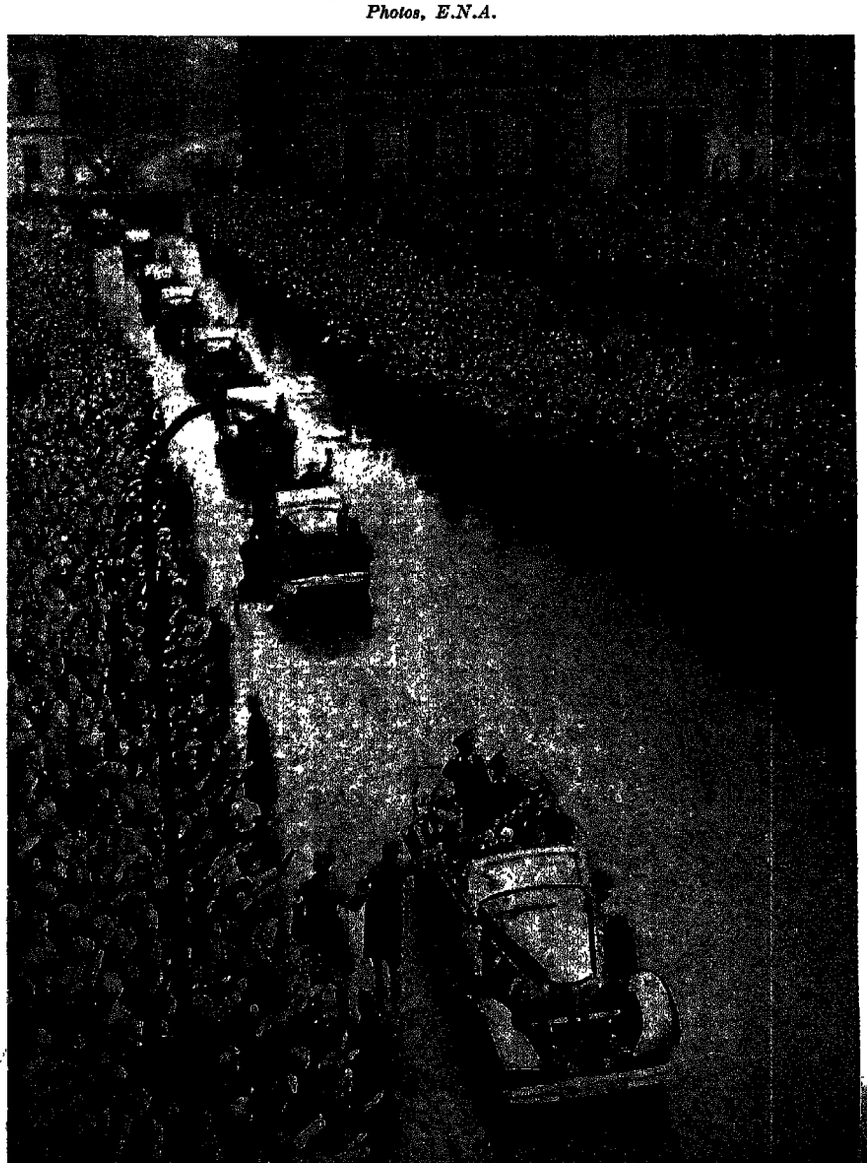
Meanwhile, the German submarine attack, though substantially modified, continued to take toll in a typically ruthless manner of British, French and neutral shipping. One story characteristic of this period may be quoted. On October 14, among three vessels sunk (one was the British Royal Mail Line steamer "Lochavon," of 9,205 tons) was the French liner "Bretagne" (10,108 tons). A British warship that had gone to the assistance of the "Lochavon" (whose survivors were in the boats for eight or nine hours) also received an SOS from the "Bretagne." She had been attacked by a U-boat at dawn. After the signal to stop, two shots were fired at the lifeboats as they were being lowered, and the ropes parted, flinging women and children into the water. One passenger estimated that at least ten shells were fired at the "Bretagne," and four or five lifeboats thus put out of action. A large number of passengers were seriously injured and some killed, including a blind Arab groping his way to find his lifebelt.

One survivor described how, having put his wife and two of his children into a boat, he set his third boy, aged 7, around his shoulders and climbed down a rope over the side. The boy lost his hold; the father jumped after him and managed to support him for one and a half hours before being rescued. The ordeal was scarcely less terrible of those who occupied the riddled lifeboats, with water up to the gunwale.

### THE MAN WHO SANK THE 'ROYAL OAK'

**Lieutenant-Commander Prien (left), since promoted Captain, commanded the U-boat which on October 14th, 1939, attacked and sank the "Royal Oak" in Scapa Flow, "a remarkable exploit," as Mr. Churchill acknowledged, "of professional skill and daring." Captain Prien is seen below driving in triumph through the streets of Berlin.**

*Photos, E.N.A.*



# *Diary of the War*

## *OCTOBER, 1939*

**October 1, 1939.** Garrison of Hela Peninsula surrenders. French advance on a mile-long front west of Saarlouis. Fierce air fighting. Men over 20 and under 22 called up.

**October 2.** R.A.F. 'planes fly over Berlin. Local enemy attacks on Western Front repulsed. M. Munters, Latvian Foreign Minister, arrives in Moscow. U.S. Senate open debate on Neutrality Bill. British freighter "Clement" reported sunk by enemy "cruiser." Belgian steamer "Suzon" sunk. Swedish steamer "Gun" reported sunk by U-boat.

**October 3.** Turkish Military Mission arrives in London. Dominican coast-guard cutter, caught refuelling U-boat, reported sunk by French cruiser. Lithuanian Foreign Minister, M. Urbsys, arrives in Moscow.

**October 4.** Karlsruhe said to have been evacuated. French repulse minor attacks. Crew of Greek ship "Diamantis," which had been torpedoed the day before, are landed by U-boat on west coast of Ireland. British steamer "Glen Farg" sunk by U-boat.

**October 5.** French Command report 7-hour battle in Moselle Valley. Hitler flies to Warsaw to review troops. Pact of Mutual Assistance between Soviet and Latvia signed. Soviet-Turkish talks held up. French submarine arrives in port with German merchant ship captured 1,000 miles from coast. Warning of imminent sinking of American ship "Iroquois" issued by German Navy.

**October 6.** Hitler announces "peace" plan to Reichstag. British Government later issues statement that his "vague and obscure" proposals will be carefully examined. Conference of Allied Commands is held in France.

**October 7.** Twelve German raids on Western Front are repulsed. Artillery actions take place between Moselle and Saar. Dutch steamer "Binnendijk" sunk in English Channel.

**October 8.** The King returns from two-day visit to Home Fleet. German flying-boat is brought down after combat with North Sea R.A.F. patrol. French repulse German patrol attacks, chiefly south-east of Zweibruecken. German naval squadron sighted by patrol aircraft south-west of Norway; enemy escape in oncoming darkness.

**October 9.** Repeated actions in North Sea between German aircraft and British warships. No British ship damaged. Four British 'planes carry out daylight reconnaissance flights along German frontier from France to North Sea; valuable photographs taken. Enemy patrol activity in valley of Lower Nied and south of Saarbruecken.

**October 10.** M. Daladier broadcasts reply to Hitler's "peace" proposals. Sir Kingsley Wood reviews work of R.A.F. in House of Commons. Officers who took part in raid on Wilhelmshaven on September 4 awarded D.F.C. Great activity by enemy reconnaissance units between Moselle and Saar. Hitler opens Winter Relief Campaign.

**October 11.** Mr. Hore-Belisha in House of Commons reviews work of B.E.F. Heavier Nazi attacks on French outposts. Soviet-Lithuanian pact signed. M. Paasikivi, Finnish envoy, arrives in Moscow. Evacuation of Germans from Baltic States in progress.

**October 12.** Sharp fighting on Western Front. Premier replies in House of Commons to Hitler's "peace" proposals. Finnish-Soviet talks open in Moscow. German liner "Cap Norte" reported captured.

**October 13.** King of Sweden invites Danish and Norwegian sovereigns and President of Finland to a conference in Stockholm. Three German submarines sunk by British Navy. British steamer "Heronspool" sunk by U-boat.

**October 14.** H.M.S. "Royal Oak" sunk by U-boat in Scapa Flow. Two French steamers, "Louisiane" and "Bretagne," and one British, "Lochavon," sunk. Finnish delegation leave Moscow to report in Helsinki.

**October 15.** French reconnaissance units active on whole front. Admiralty issue lists of 414 survivors of "Royal Oak." Further R.A.F. leaflet flights over Germany.

**October 16.** Two enemy air raids over Firth of Forth. Twelve to 14 'planes take part, four of which are brought down. Slight damage done to cruiser "Edinburgh" and destroyer "Mohawk." German troops launch attack on four-mile front east of Moselle and are halted by gun-fire. Enemy attack later along 20-mile front east of Saar. French outposts retire to lines of defence in front of Maginot Line. French vessels "Emile Miguet" and "Vermont" sunk by U-boats.

**October 17.** Two German air attacks over north of Scotland. First, four machines reach Scapa Flow; two are brought down. "Iron Duke" suffers some damage. Second, ten 'planes over Orkneys; no damage done. Enemy aircraft also active near East Coast. Two destroyed by R.A.F. machines, all of which return safely. Sharp infantry engagements on Western Front. Negotiations between Turkey and Moscow are finally broken off. Norwegian steamer "Lorentz W. Hansen" reported sunk. Crew of British steamer "Smeaton," sunk by U-boat, brought into port.

**October 18.** Enemy aircraft approach Scapa Flow but are driven off. Reported that British liners "City of Mandalay" and "Yorkshire" were torpedoed in Atlantic.

**October 19.** Anglo-French Treaty with Turkey signed at Ankara. Scandinavian monarchs and President of Finland broadcast declarations of mutual solidarity.

**October 20.** German reconnaissance aircraft appear twice over Firth of Forth area, but disappear before contact can be made. Western Front quiet. Announced that Hitler had signed decree by which three million Jews now in Poland will get own reserve in East Poland.

**October 21.** British convoy in North Sea is attacked by 12 German raiders, four of which are brought down by British fighters and escort vessels. Heavy artillery action on Western Front. Finnish delegation leaves for Moscow with new instructions. Italo-German agreement signed for transfer to Reich of Germans in South Tirol.

**October 22.** Enemy aircraft seen off East Coast. Later two 'planes appear over south-east Scotland, and one is shot down. Western Front calm.

**October 23.** U.S. steamer "City of Flint," which had been seized as contraband by German battleship "Deutschland," is brought by prize crew into Kola Bay, north of Murmansk. Two British ships, "Sea Venture" and "Whitemantle," reported sunk.

**October 24.** Raids and ambushes on Western Front. Von Ribbentrop delivers bitter speech at Danzig. Greek steamer "Konstantinos Hadjipateras" sunk by U-boat. Finnish delegation again leaves Moscow for consultation. Poland's gold reserve of £15,000,000 reaches Paris.

**October 25.** Reconnaissance flights over Berlin, Magdeburg and Hamburg. Five British ships reported sunk: "Ledbury," "Menin Ridge," and "Tafna," in North Atlantic; "Stonegate," by the "Deutschland"; and "Clan Chisholm," off Spanish coast.

**October 26.** Wreck of German submarine washed up on Goodwin Sands. Murmansk authorities order release and departure of "City of Flint."

**October 27.** Massed concentration of German troops on all Western frontiers. U.S. Senate pass bill repealing arms embargo. King Leopold broadcasts to U.S.A. German submarine sunk by French Navy in Atlantic. Trawlers "St. Nidan" and "Lynx II" sunk.

**October 28.** Nazi 'plane forced down east of Dalkeith. Two of crew survive. Another German 'plane appears over Orkneys and is chased away. Night reconnaissances over Southern Germany.

**October 29.** Western Front quiet. British heavy guns are moved into position. Hitler reported to have arrived at Godesberg. British steamer "Malabar" sunk by U-boat.

**October 30.** Admiralty announce that a destroyer flotilla has been in action with two German bombers south of Dogger Bank. No damage done to ships. Nazi 'planes seen off north-east and south-east coasts of England. Increased activity by contact units on Western Front. R.A.F. machines make extensive reconnaissances of aerodromes in North Germany.

**October 31.** Air Ministry announce first encounter between British fighters and German bombers over French territory. One raider is shot down. Germans use heavy guns for first time, shelling village eight miles behind French lines. Molotov attacks Britain in speech to Soviet Supreme Council. Important changes are made in Italian Cabinet. "City of Flint" arrives at Tromsoe.

## *Historic Documents. LIV*

# *SIR NEVILE HENDERSON ON HITLER AND HIS AIMS*

An account by Sir Nevile Henderson of his last weeks in Germany before the outbreak of war was issued as a White Paper on October 17, 1939. The British Ambassador's efforts to avert disaster have already been described in Chapter 3 (page 17). Here we pass over the record of journeys, interviews and reports, and reprint passages from the White Paper which are invaluable as a psychological sidelight on the causes of the war.

HERR HITLER and National Socialism are the products of the defeat of a great nation in war and its reaction against the confusion and distress which followed that defeat. National Socialism itself is a revolution and a conception of national philosophy. Contrary to democracy, which implies the subordination of the State to the service of its citizens, Nazism prescribes the subordination of its citizens to the service of the State, an all-embracing Moloch, and to the individual who rules that State.

So long as National Socialism remained an article for internal consumption, the outside world, according to its individual predilection, might criticize or sympathize or merely watch with anxiety. The Government of Germany was the affair of the German people. It was not until the theory of German nationalism was extended beyond Germany's own frontiers that the Nazi philosophy exceeded the limits compatible with peace.

It would be idle to deny the great achievements of the man who restored to the German nation its self-respect and its disciplined orderliness. The tyrannical methods which were employed within Germany itself to obtain this result were detestable, but were Germany's own concern. Many of Herr Hitler's social reforms, in spite of the complete disregard of personal liberty of thought, word or deed, were on highly advanced democratic lines. . . .

Nor was the unity of Great Germany in itself an ignoble ideal. It had long been the dream of some of the highest-minded of German thinkers. . . . It was not the incorporation of Austria and the Sudeten Germans in the Reich which so much shocked public opinion in the world, as the unscrupulous and hateful methods which Herr Hitler employed to precipitate an incorporation which would probably have peacefully come in due course of its own volition and in accordance with the established principle of self-determination.

Yet even those methods might have been endured in a world which had experienced 1914–1918 and which sought peace as an end in itself, if Herr Hitler had been willing to accord to others the rights which he claimed for Germany. Revolutions are like avalanches, which once set in motion cannot stop till they crash to destruction at the appointed end of their career. History alone will determine whether Herr Hitler could have diverted Nazism into normal channels, or whether he was the victim of the movement which he had initiated, or whether it was his own megalomania which drove it beyond the limits which civilization was prepared to tolerate.

### Another 'Scrap of Paper' Torn Up

BE that as it may, the true background to the events of August, 1939 was the occupation of Prague on the 15th March of this year, the callous destruction thereby of the hard and newly-won liberty of a free and independent people, and Herr Hitler's deliberate violation by this act of the Munich Agreement which he had signed not quite six months before. In 1939, as in 1914, the origin of war with Germany has been due to the deliberate tearing up by the latter of a scrap of paper. . . . Up to last March the German ship of State had flown the German national flag, and in spite of the "sickening technique" of Nazism it was difficult not to concede to Germany the right both to control her own destiny and to benefit from those principles which were accorded to others. On the 15th March, by the ruthless suppression of the freedom of the Czechs, its captain hoisted the skull and crossbones of the pirate, cynically discarded his own theory of racial purity, and appeared under his true colours as an unprincipled menace to European peace and liberty. . . .

The tragedy of any dictator is that as he goes on his entourage steadily and inexorably deteriorates. For lack of freedom of utterance he loses the services of the best men. All opposition becomes intolerable to him. All those, therefore, who are bold enough to express opinions contrary to his views are shed one by one, and he is in the end surrounded by mere yes-men, whose flattery and counsels are alone endurable to him. In my report on the events of 1938 I drew your Lordship's special attention to the far-reaching and unfortunate results of the Blomberg marriage. I am more than ever convinced of the major disaster which that—in itself—minor incident involved, owing to the consequent elimination from Herr Hitler's entourage of the more moderate and independent of his advisers, such as Field-Marshal von Blomberg himself, Baron von Neurath, Generals Fritsch, Beck, etc. After February of last year Herr Hitler became more and more shut off from external influences and a law unto himself.

People are apt, in my opinion, to exaggerate the malign influence of Herr von Ribbentrop, Dr. Goebbels, Herr Himmler and the rest. It was probably consistently sinister, not because of its suggestiveness (since Herr Hitler alone decided policy), nor because it merely applauded and encouraged, but because, if Herr Hitler appeared to hesitate, the extremists of the party at once proceeded to fabricate situations calculated to drive Herr Hitler into courses which even he at times shrank from risking. The simplest method of doing this was through the medium of a controlled Press. . . .

### Hitler's Admiration and Envy of Britain

HERR HITLER'S constant repetition of his desire for good relations with Great Britain was undoubtedly a sincere conviction. He will prove in the future a fascinating study for the historian and the biographer with psychological leanings. Widely different explanations will be propounded, and it would be out of place and time to comment at any length in this dispatch on this aspect of Herr Hitler's mentality and character. But he combined, as I fancy many Germans do, admiration for the British race with envy of their achievements and hatred of their opposition to Germany's excessive aspirations. . . .

Geniuses are strange creatures, and Herr Hitler, among other paradoxes, is a mixture of long-headed calculation and violent and arrogant impulse provoked by resentment. The former drove him to seek Britain's friendship and the latter finally into war with her. Moreover, he believes his resentment to be entirely justified. He failed to realize why his military-cum-police tyranny should be repugnant to British ideals of individual and national freedom and liberty, or why he should not be allowed a free hand in Central and Eastern Europe to subjugate smaller and, as he regards them, inferior peoples to superior German rule and culture. He believed he could buy British acquiescence in his own far-reaching schemes by offers of alliance with and guarantees for the British Empire. Such acquiescence was indispensable to the success of his ambitions and he worked unceasingly to secure it. His great mistake was his complete failure to understand the inherent British sense of morality, humanity and freedom. . . .

### 'The Fuehrer Alone Decides'

ONE of Herr Hitler's greatest drawbacks is that, except for two official visits to Italy, he has never travelled abroad. For his knowledge of British mentality he consequently relied on Herr von Ribbentrop as an ex-Ambassador to Britain . . . whom he regarded as a man of the world. If report be true, Herr von Ribbentrop gave him consistently false counsels in regard to England. . . .

Even the most absolute Dictator is susceptible to the influence of his surroundings. Nevertheless, Herr Hitler's decisions, his calculations and his opportunisms were his own. As Field-Marshal Goering once said to me: "When a decision has to be taken, none of us count more than the stones on which we are standing. It is the Fuehrer alone who decides." . . .

Chapter 24

# TWO MONTHS OF HITLER'S BLUNDERS

*This chapter, written by an anti-Nazi German refugee, intimately acquainted with German political life and leaders over a long period, throws into relief the many blunders committed by the German Fuehrer during the first two months of war, his errors in the diplomatic and strategic fields, his misjudgement of British psychology, and the falsity of all his fundamental assumptions. It covers the period August 23–October 31, 1939*

"A law unto himself . . . a mixture of long-headed calculation and violent and arrogant impulse provoked by resentment"—thus Sir Nevile Henderson's "Final Report" on his mission to Berlin describes Adolf Hitler. Completely ignorant of foreign mentality—he had never travelled abroad except for his two state visits to Italy—and consequently trusting entirely in the advice of submissive servants such as Ribbentrop and Goering, Hitler was bound to make absurd blunders in foreign policy.

His first major error was the invasion of Czecho-Slovakia. Although he had heard the serious warning in Mr. Chamberlain's Birmingham speech of January 28, 1939 ("Not defiance, nor deference, but defence"), he trusted in Ribbentrop's repeated and emphatic assurances that the British would never fight. So he marched into Prague in March and into Memel in April, thereby provoking Great Britain's pledges to Poland, Rumania, and Greece, and her protective alliance with Turkey. Once before, on his preposterous Foreign Minister's insistence, he had blundered into showing his hand too soon; this was at the end of 1938, when he had allowed Ribbentrop to propose to the Polish Foreign Minister, Colonel Beck, a combined German-Polish attack on Russia in pursuit of the old Hitler-Rosenberg dream of seizing the Ukrainian wheatfields. Had he not then encountered a rebuff, justified subsequently by Poland's tragic fate as the buffer between the two dictatorships, history would have taken another course.

As things went, Ribbentrop's successes proved even more disastrous than his defeats. For when, in August, 1939, Ribbentrop surprised the world by the Russo-German Agreement, he destroyed with one stroke of his pen:

(1) the entire Nazi "Drang nach Osten" policy;

(2) the anti-Comintern pact (this alienated Italy from Germany; dealt Japan such a smashing blow that the Hiranuma Cabinet immediately resigned, and the anti-British campaign in China disappeared as if by magic, simultaneously with the Nazi flags in Japan; and ensured that Franco's Spain decided upon benevolent neutrality towards France and Britain);

(3) the whole Nazi "Weltanschauung"—the German people's acceptance of Hitlerism with all its hardships and cruelties as a necessary evil because they believed it secured the only reliable bulwark against the Bolshevists, who for nearly twenty years had been termed "common bloodthirsty criminals," "scum of humanity," "human hyenas," and so forth.

**The Nazi-Soviet Pact**

Dr. Alfred Rosenberg, Hitler's faithful Russian-born high-priest, author of Germany's atheist gospel, "The Myth of the 20th Century," must have wept tears of blood when the hands of the new favourite, Ribbentrop, tore to pieces what had been the only remotely reasonable basis of the whole Nazi regime. That Moscow blunder rid France of any concern about her south-eastern and south-western frontiers and permitted her to concentrate upon the Siegfried Line. It rid Britain of all possible worries in the Far East. It repulsed Hungary, Greater Germany's south-eastern neighbour, who had been pro-Axis but was even more strongly anti-Comintern.

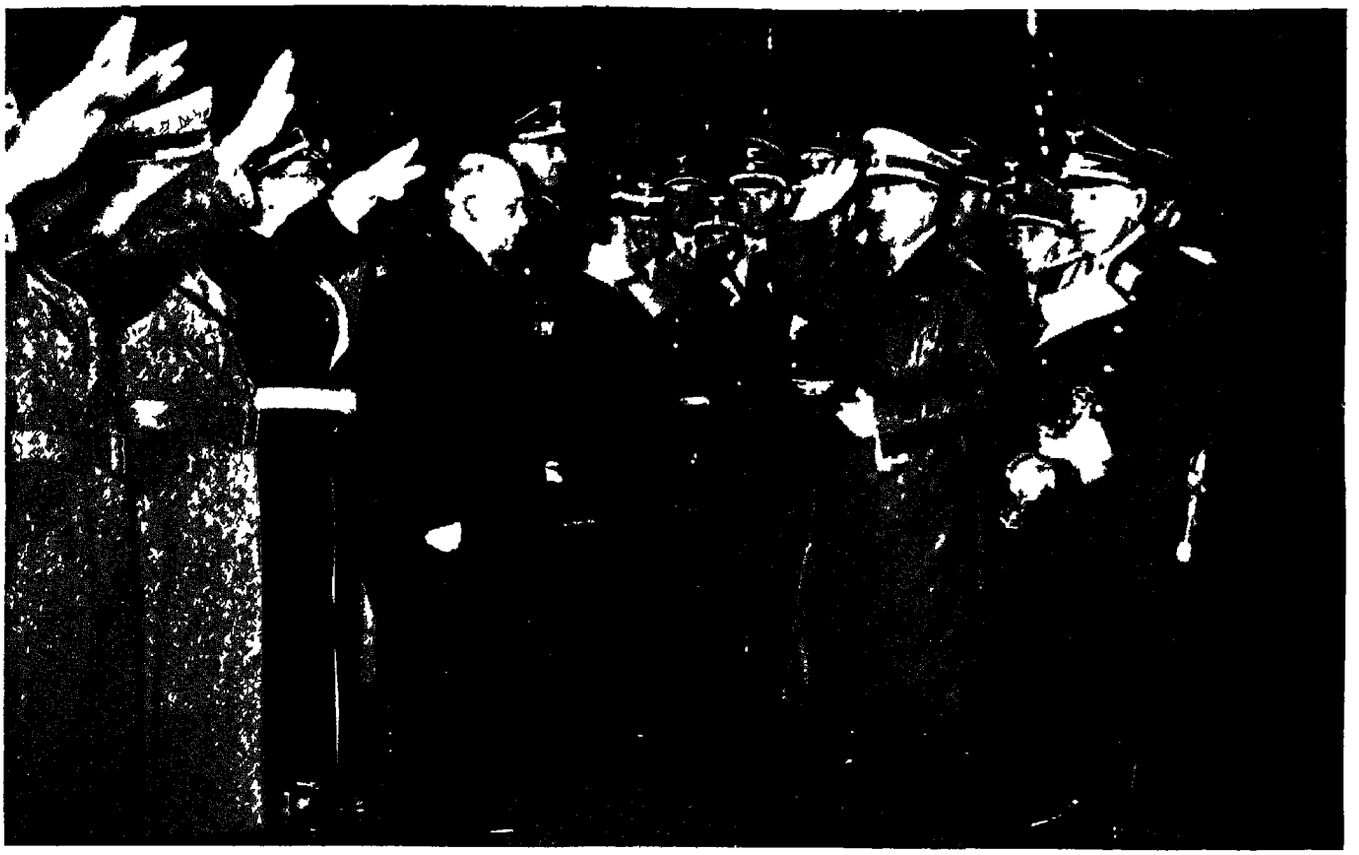
Moreover, the signing of that agreement and its prompt ratification by the U.S.S.R. on August 31 sealed the fate of the three Baltic states, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, which had always been considered zones of influence for German economy and Kultur and were thickly interspersed with German settlers. For 700 years the German stratum had predominated in what were once Imperial Russia's Baltic provinces; world-famous men such as the theologian Harnack, the physicist Ostwald, the historians Schiemann and Haller, the surgeon von Bergmann and the philosopher Count Keyserling hailed from there. Now, by an order of October 9, more than 100,000 of these unhappy people



**HITLER AND HIS WOULD-BE BISMARCK**

**One of the most baleful influences which surrounded the Fuehrer was that of his Foreign Minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, who, "if report be true," said Sir Nevile Henderson, "gave him consistently false counsels in regard to England." They are seen together at army manoeuvres in this photograph.**

*Photo, Central Press*



**GREETINGS FOR THE PERJURED FUEHRER**

**On his return to Berlin from Czecho-Slovakia after its annexation in March, 1939, Hitler received a tremendous welcome from his followers. In this picture he is seen on his arrival in Berlin. On the right is Field-Marshal Goering, and between him and Hitler can be seen the head of Dr. Goebbels In civilian clothes are the Japanese and Hungarian ambassadors, who do not indulge in the Nazi salute**

*Photo, Wide World*

whose love for their tradition and soil had made them faithful servants of the Tsars and, later, of the small republics, were to be uprooted, expropriated, herded into ships ironically bearing the "Strength Through Joy" flag, and carried to "somewhere in Germany" like so many Czechs and Austrians before them.

Germany had not enough "Lebens raum?" It now seemed that there was plenty and to spare; for suddenly, and obviously in order to give a patriotic appearance to that mass-migration enforced by Stalin, Hitler's East Prussian provincial leader Koch claimed 2,000,000 more inhabitants for his province. This was another blunder; how, henceforward, was Hitler to justify his demands for more living space, and how were his followers to be made to sacrifice their lives for the conquest of more territory and their hard-earned wealth for the financing of other megalomaniac dreams of their leader? To German readers of "Mein Kampf" the German-Soviet Agreement came as a severe shock; indeed, that anti-Communist document written by Hitler himself was "banned" thenceforward by the author's own command—no longer obtainable at public libraries, no longer given as a wedding present to every newly-married couple.

**Too Much Lebensraum!**

The result was outspoken criticism of their Fuehrer by the German people—and Hitler's hangmen had a busy time. As far back as August 25, according to serious Swiss newspapers, a great "purge" of his followers had been carried out, claiming the lives of about another 1,000 people, amongst them 70 to 80 higher officials of the Party, Then, on October 30, Heinrich Himmler, the Gestapo chief, was called upon to "clean out" the German prisons and concentration camps in order to make room for new victims—for refractory party comrades above all—while at the same time came news of mass-executions among the Austrian and Czech soldiers pressed into the German armies.

All the aforementioned blunders were errors in dealing with Germans themselves; they formed a wedge driven by the Leader's hand into the structure of his own Third Reich. But from the very beginning of the war Hitler made as many astonishing mistakes in dealing with the outside world, belligerent as well as neutral. His career of blundering began with the sinking of the "Athenia" on September 3, a dastardly crime committed without warning a few hours after the declaration of war. The parallel with the sinking of the "Lusitania" on May 7, 1915, which ultimately decided America's active participation in the first Great War, was striking: 300 among the 1,400 persons on board were American, and a proportionate percentage of the passengers lost belonged to that neutral power which Hitler ought to have considered above all. . . . Yet only a few weeks later, on October 23, he underlined his stupidity by seizing, in violation of international law, the "City of Flint," the very American steamer which had earned international praise for its work of rescue at the side of the sinking "Athenia."

Inasmuch as such historical decisions can be traced back to single events, Hitler can ascribe the attitude of the Washington Government to his own doings. The prompt denunciation of the "Standstill Agreement" by which, ever since the financial crisis in August, 1931, the repayment of German debts to American creditors had been extended, and the subsequent impounding of German cash and bonds to the extent of £5,000,000 in America[illegible] security for such debts



**JAPAN DROPS HER PILOT**

The conclusion of the Russo-German pact met with bitter resentment in Japan, and led to the resignation of Baron Hiranuma (above) and his Cabinet. A new Cabinet was formed, headed by General Nobuyuki Abe (below), who assumed the offices of Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs

*Photos, Wide World*



return blows felt by Germany. The second, and even sterner, retaliation began with the repeal of the Arms Embargo and the passage of the new Neutrality Bill. By the new "cash and carry" policy introduced in the Bill it was made possible for belligerent powers able to pay for the goods in cash and to ship them in their own vessels, to buy in the U.S.A. any kind of armament required—a formula which practically amounted to a privilege for Great Britain and France, as Germany had not the necessary foreign currency, nor could she send her ships across seas dominated by the Democracies.

"The senseless ambition of one man," which had sent hundreds of thousands of men to their doom, provoked Nemesis in other ways. Mr. Winston Churchill and Mr. Anthony Eden, both of whom, ever since the September crisis of 1938, had been branded by Hitler's propaganda machinery as "war-mongers" and arch-enemies of the peaceful German nation, were selected for outstanding posts in Mr. Chamberlain's Cabinet. The Palestinian conflict, by a tacit understanding between Jews and Arabs, ceased only a few days after the outbreak of the war—clearly proving who had fostered it for years with the hope of diverting British interest from the European scene and of creating difficulties for British politics. The Balkan peoples, at all times aware of the solidarity of their interests with the Western Democracies, but wavering under the permanent threat of sharing Austria's and Czecho-Slovakia's fate, and bound by Germany's enforced barter agreements, rallied together in their decision to prepare their defences and to fight if necessary. By now they had learned the crude and brutal tactics of Hitler.

**The 'Sickening Technique'**

As the German Fuehrer and his unscrupulous mouthpiece, the mendacious Dr. Goebbels, had done against Schuschnigg's Austrian patriots and against the valiant little Czecho-Slovakian people, they now invented "atrocities" committed by Poland against her "innocent German minority." It was a holy duty, a crusade indeed, to save these "tormented brothers"! After the invasion of Poland on September 1—in itself a breach of a solemn non-aggression pact



**IN THE YEAR BEFORE POWER WAS THEIRS**

The photograph above, showing the Nazi leaders before they attained power, was taken at Bad Elster, Saxony, in the autumn of 1932. In the first row, from left to right, are Himmler, Chief of the Gestapo; Frick, Minister of the Interior; Fuehrer Adolf Hitler; General Von Epp, President of Colonial League; and Field-Marshal Goering. Back row, left to right: Mutschmann, Governor of Saxony; Josef Goebbels, Minister of Propaganda; Heydebreck—"liquidated." In the rear is Bernhard Rust, Minister for Education

*Photo, Topical Press*

proposed and concluded by Hitler himself in 1934 and with another five years to run—the Nazi propaganda and calumny campaign swelled to hitherto unknown proportions in order to conceal Hitler's own ruthless war of extermination. For, contrary to his previous promise to the world in general, women and children, open cities and peaceful hamlets alike were destroyed by continuous air raids, artillery action, and machine-gunning.

**The Price of Power**

When, on September 17, the march of the Soviet armies into the practically undefended eastern half of Poland made clear what price Hitler had had to pay for his agreement with Stalin, he tried to overcome the disgust of his own "Old Guard" and misgivings abroad by a triumphant entry into "liberated" Danzig — liberated from the Liberals who had embodied her proud, old Hanseatic spirit, from the Jews who had built up her ancient world-wide trade, from the Poles who had made her prosperous. . .

In the speech he made there on September 19 he blundered as seldom before. In again complaining of the Polish "atrocities," he forgot that only a year before he had praised German-Polish friendship, describing it as that "understanding which, emanating from Danzig, had succeeded in removing all friction between Germany and Poland and made it possible to work together in true amity." Now he declared that "he did not know in what state of mind the Polish Government could have been to reject his proposals"—those proposals which had not reached Warsaw or, for that matter, London or Paris, when he unleashed the dogs of war, and which, in any case, would have meant the end of independent Poland. He tried to twist the facts, to make the world overlook the callous breach of his promise to spare women and children, by representing the British blockade, which only deprived him of war material, as an attack upon German women and children; yet he had asserted before that Germany was amply provided with food for years.

It must have been difficult even for Nazis trained in blind faith in their Fuehrer to make rhyme or reason of these contradictory statements, or to accept the cursory allusion to Russia's and Germany's respective national regimes remaining unaffected by their agreement, when Hitler had only a year before said of Moscow's "doctrine of world destruction" and of the "bearers of poisonous bacilli" that Russia was the only state with which he had never sought relationships, and did not want to have any.

In overthrowing the fundamental Nazi doctrine of anti-Bolshevism he evidently fomented the internal unrest which brought about anti-war demonstrations and strikes in Essen, Düsseldorf and Cologne, in Brno, Pilsen and Vienna, as early as the first half of September. They were suppressed with such increased activity by the dreaded Gestapo that soon that body had to advertise for more recruits. Further,

**Reactions in Germany**

the increase of taxes by fifty per cent, lengthening of hours of work (mostly without extra pay), confiscation of the funds of savings banks and social insurances, the severe rationing of meat, fat, bread, skimmed milk, textiles, shoes, and so forth, did nothing to stem the wave of discontent and distrust spreading all over the country, which now contained more than twenty million citizens (Austrians and Czechs) who had been forced into allegiance.

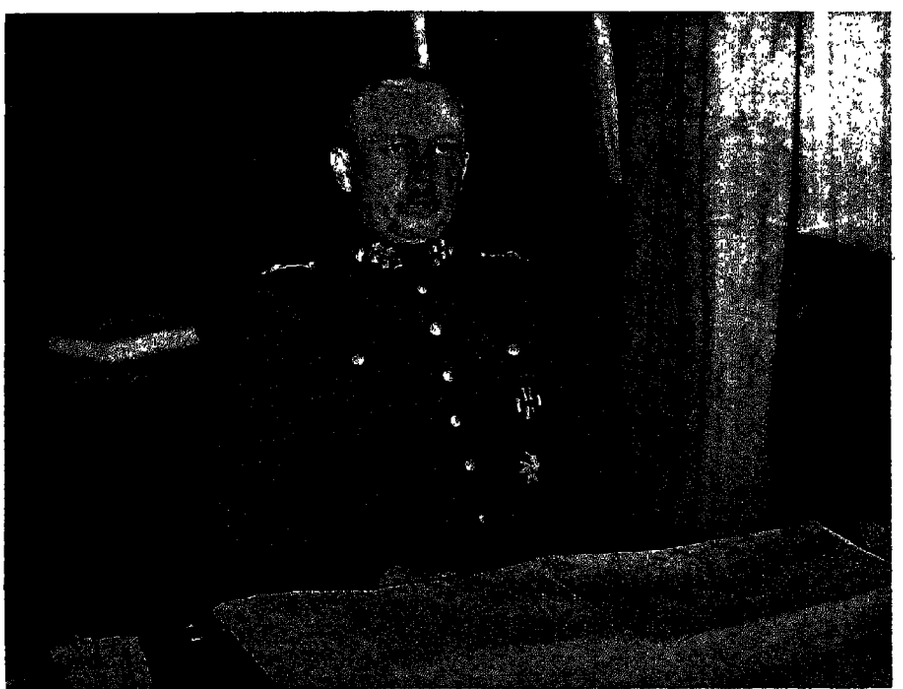
Other sinister indications of the blunder Hitler had made in provoking the Democratic world and associating himself with his former arch-enemy, Russia, filtered through; his own favourite A.D.C., Bahls, "died" suddenly under mysterious circumstances. General Baron von Fritsch, commander of the Rail "purge" of [illegible]



**ARCHITECTS OF THE AXIS**

Count Ciano, Italian Foreign Minister, is here seen being welcomed at Berlin by Herr von Ribbentrop (right) on October 1, 1939, when he arrived there to have interviews with Hitler and Ribbentrop on the subject of the German "peace" proposals.

*Photo, Planet News*



**SOLDIER WHOM HITLER FEARED**

General Werner Freiherr von Fritsch, who was appointed chief of the German High Command in February 1934, "resigned," ostensibly for reasons of health, on February 4, 1938—the day on which Hitler "purged" the Reichswehr—and hundreds of generals and colonels shared the disgrace of their commander. He met his death in mysterious circumstances on September 22, 1939, during the Polish War.

*Photo, Wide World*

in front of Warsaw (it was later alleged, and more or less substantiated, that he had been murdered by order of the Secret Police). It soon became clear that the new "faithful ally" had advanced beyond the one-time Curzon Line not to assist but to stop the German army, and that one of the secret clauses of Ribbentrop's fateful agreement had been that Germany should give up all her south-eastern ambitions—not the Ukraine only, but her designs upon Rumania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia as well—practically all the Balkans becoming a Russian sphere of influence.

Turkey, while realizing her mistake in the first Great War, and though ever since attached to the Western Powers, had carried through her modernization largely with German help and equipment. On the other hand, her fight for independence had been strongly supported by Soviet Russia, with whom a close friendship had been kept up, even when material interests seemed to clash. It would have been natural that she, first of all, should have fallen into the new Russo-German orbit had such a thing at all been portended by the agreement, for which Hitler had acclaimed Ribbentrop as the greatest German statesman, "not even excluding Bismarck." What happened was the exact contrary—proof in itself of the flimsy and insincere nature of the understanding between Russia and Germany. Summoned to Moscow, Turkey's gifted Foreign Minister, Shukri Sarajoglu, after three weeks of more or less friendly haggling, left—in order to consolidate Turkey's treaties with France and Britain by a fifteen years' mutual assistance pact, signed in Ankara on October 19. Thereby the Mediterranean and the Allies' overseas and overland routes to the East became safe. Herr von Papen Hitler's former stirrup holder, deputy and ambassador in danger-spots like Vienna and Ankara, hastened from Turkey to Berlin and from Berlin to Turkey, presumably more to save his long-threatened neck than his diplomatic laurels, which von Ribbentrop's Moscow "triumph" had nipped in the bud.



*Photo, U N A*

**HEADS OF THE NAZI FORCES ON PARADE**

**The photograph above was taken at a Hitler birthday parade in Berlin, and shows the Fuehrer with Field-Marshal Goering, General von Blomberg and Admiral Raeder (head of the German Navy). General von Blomberg, former War Minister of the Reich, was dismissed in the Army purge of February, 1938, at the same time as General von Fritsch**

The crude and clumsy new school of German diplomacy, which knew only two methods—the threat of force, and bribery with other people's property—was bound to fail where it met either self-confident power or more subtle and more civilized intellect. The complete break-down brought about in the Mediterranean by Hitler's blunders—Spain, Turkey and Greece definitely estranged from Germany, Egypt Britain's faithful ally, Palestine for the first time in five years entirely calm—could not but further influence Italy in observing strict and successful neutrality in the new war. It is no secret that there was never any love lost between the Italian dictator, always an intelligent and clear-sighted statesman, and the "cheap imitator" of his methods and technique.

They had tried, after a period of marked coolness, to use each other to gain their respective national ends; but Mussolini soon found out that the spoils were meant to be for Hitler alone. His decisions were accordingly prompt and clear. The air-raid shelters, improvised some time before the war in Rome and other Italian cities, were demolished; what small black-out measures had been taken were abolished; overseas shipping, a great source of national income and, with France, Britain and Germany at war, a particular asset, was resumed on a large scale.

Hitler's "he did not want Italy to help him in his fight but thanked Mussolini for his faithful friendship," pronounced on the eve of the war, strongly recalled the fable of the fox and the grapes. . . .

Hitler had, at least until shortly before he started "his own little war"—he might have called it this, as the Empress Eugénie did that of 1870—completely misjudged Mussolini's intentions. But the Fuehrer blundered even more severely in his judgement of the psychology of the British Dominions. "Canada and South Africa," so he had made his own people believe, following Ribbentrop's expert advice, "would never fight, even if Great Britain herself would." These Dominions, he believed, would break away from the Empire, and Australia and

New Zealand would, at best, grant useless moral support. Intense propaganda—a waste of much of the Nazis' meagre income in foreign currency—had been flung especially at the African communities within the British Commonwealth of Nations. The Afrikander movement had, prematurely and shortsightedly, been claimed as a stronghold for Hitlerism and German world domination. When it came to the point, however, on the fourth day of the war, the Hertzog Cabinet, which had supported Dr. Malan's "Nationalists," resigned defeated, and General Smuts one of the most heroic and wisest personalities of our time, took power with the whole-hearted approval not only of South Africa, but of all parts of the Empire and the democratic world.

The ensuing rally of all the Dominions the offers of Indian rulers, the large-scale measures for raising, training and equipping air forces for the Motherland (described at more length in Chapter 20) proved a hard blow for the primitive Ribbentrop conception of a dilapidated Empire. Like a boomerang he saw coming back, and with a vengeance, his rash assumptions of a world Nazified by the noisy trumpets or the cunning underground work of his vast propaganda organization. When, on September 21, Rumania's Premier Calinescu was assassinated by the Iron Guard, the faithful disciples of the Nazis, a blinding spotlight fell upon these activities which had gone on practically everywhere for years.

It was therefore nothing like a conversion when, at the beginning of October, Hitler started his "Peace Crusade." Craftily, according to his own lights, he had tried to benefit by the rather unpleasant diplomatic situation in which he had been placed by the demands of his new "ally." Stalin had ordered Ribbentrop—no other word would be adequate—to go to Moscow on September 26, in order to tell him that the Baltic and Balkan states were henceforward Russian preserves. A consolation prize, in the shape of a substantial correction of the Russo-German borderline in Poland in Germany's favour and a promise to support Hitler's intended peace offensive, was granted. The offensive took the form of a somewhat nebulous declaration, to which the Prime Minister and Lord Halifax answered respectively on October 3 and 4 in both Houses of Parliament: "No mere assurances from the present German Government could be accepted by us. For that Government have too often proved in the past that their undertakings are worthless when it suits them that they should be broken."



**GERMAN ARMY LEADERS IN DISGRACE**

Between October 20 and 25, 1939, it leaked out that three former Reichswehr leaders had been imprisoned in different fortresses. They were General von Blomberg, formerly War Minister of the German Reich, seen above shaking hands with his Fuehrer; General von Stuelpnagel (right) and General von Hammerstein (below), all gifted army leaders. The reasons for their imprisonment were not divulged

*Photos, Keystone, Wide World*

The "liquidation of the war" on Herr Hitler's own lines had broken down before it had as much as been discussed—a serious moral defeat if ever there was one, and a personal rebuff to Hitler, who once more had blundered in trying to dictate, as he had when he tried to force the Neutrals into his own scheme for a blockade, or when he clumsily tried to divide Britain and France.

But he did not give up at once. Before that body of automata paid to and made to cheer, which Hitler unwarrantably calls the German Reichstag,



**HITLER CONSULTS HIS STATE GOVERNORS**

Hitler is seen above in conference with six of his principal Reichstatthalters, the governors of the federated states of the Reich. Hitler is seated between Rudolf Hess (nearest the camera) and his State Secretary, Dr. Heinrich Lammers. On the extreme left is Lieut.-Gen. Franz Xaver von Epp, president of the Reich Colonial League, and beyond him sit Reichstatthalters Sauckel, Mutschmann, Wagner, Sprenger and Hildebrandt.

*Photo, W. A. Fitzgerald*

he delivered on October 6 one of his verbose orations. What he proposed under the name of Peace was nothing more and nothing less than that his past misdeeds, including Poland's destruction, should be condoned, in return for one more of those promises which he had broken whenever he felt like it. The British Government's official statement of which this "offer" was thought worthy repeated the conditions laid down by Mr. Chamberlain for a peace proposal that could serve as a basis for discussion. The world's press, with the exception of some organs financed by Hitler and Moscow's official papers, treated the Fuehrer's "last offer" rather badly, as "the desperate cry of an old offender abandoned by all."

**Losses in the Diplomatic War**

Hitler had truly paid the price for that Russian support with which he had hoped to intimidate the Western world into allowing him to keep another conquered land. He had been deprived of the control of the Baltic Sea; and the ensuing conflict between Grand Admiral Raeder, experienced chief of the German Navy, and Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop was so embittered that even Himmler's Secret Police could not keep it a secret. It was no isolated event. Shortly afterwards, between October 20 and 25, it was learned that Field-Marshal Baron von Blomberg, at one time Hitler's most faithful henchman and War Minister, General Baron von Hammerstein, his predecessor as Chief of the Army, and General von Stulpnagel, one of the most gifted Army leaders, had been imprisoned in different fortresses. Was it conspiracy, perhaps with a view to monarchist restoration, or was it undesired if justified criticism? When even Julius Streicher and Josef Goebbels were not safe, and when everybody round the dictator became afraid of the "carpet-biter"—so they called Hitler when he fell into one of his maniacal fits of depression—every conjecture seemed permitted.

Indeed, he had not much to rejoice over. He could not but distrust the only "ally" he had found, his former deadly enemy who negotiated a trade agreement with Britain while Germany waited in vain for Russian timber; who refused him, in the name of neutrality, the "loan" of 2,000 aeroplanes which might have enabled him to make his boasted thrust against England; who in general gave proof of the most cynical egoism instead of sacrificing herself for the holy cause of National Socialism.

Molotov's speech on October 31 clearly defined Soviet policy as free from entanglements, neutral and self-centred. Russia wanted to shorten the war, but by what means and at whose ultimate expense the Moscow Sphinx did not betray—even to Hitler, who had evidently waited anxiously for some material support. To many who are not conversant with the primitive mentality of Russian and Siberian peasants, that speech, for which the Soviet Premier had called together 1,000 delegates from all parts of the U.S.S.R. in Europe and Asia, must have appeared more like a somewhat crude jest than a solemn declaration of policy at a turning-point of history. To Hitler, presented as an apostle of peace facing the war-mongering capitalistic Democracies, but left alone in his fight with them, it must have come as a bitter blow.

Simultaneously his "true friend and ally," Signor Mussolini, announced the elimination from his Cabinet of all the figures outstanding as architects of the Axis policy. Without attaching undue importance to the dropping "with honours" of even such important personalities as Signor Starace, head official of the Fascist Party, or Signor Alfieri, Goebbels' Italian counterpart—for the Duce never lets anyone grow rusty in his job—their replacement at this precise moment could not but cause bitterness to Hitler against his former brother-in-arms.

The war had lasted only two months; except for the Polish tragedy, they were singularly eventless ones, especially in view of the famous German "Blitzkrieg" boasts. Yet they had been sufficient to prove to Hitler that all his fundamental assumptions were wrong; that he had lost all those nations and men whom he had won or coerced to his side previously; that his grim new "ally," dread of whom had estranged all the others, was going to sit on the fence looking only after Russian interests; that time was against him; and that Britain, after all, *would* fight.

# *Historic Documents. LV and LVI*

## *WORDS OF CHEER TO KEEPERS OF THE HOME FRONT*

Modern warfare involves not only the fighting forces of land, sea, and air, but the great army of men and women behind the lines, for most of whom is dullness instead of danger, hard work, self-sacrifice and discomfort untouched by the glamour surrounding the Services. Here are extracts from speeches showing that the organization and morale of the Home Front constitute essential factors in winning the war.

SIR SAMUEL HOARE LORD PRIVY SEAL, IN A BROADCAST SEPTEMBER 22 1939:

SOME of you are perplexed. I am not surprised. Your life has been suddenly changed. Your future has become uncertain. You had been keyed up to great air raids, and instead of the heroic sacrifice that you had been ready to offer you have had three weeks of domestic trouble, of irritating worry, of gloomy foreboding.

In the war of nerves these small offensives are sometimes more difficult to meet than the massed attacks. They need the steadfast fortitude that only comes from a set purpose. This steadfast fortitude is pre-eminent among British qualities. It is showing itself in these difficult days when we are passing from the world of peace into the world of war.

At this moment of transition there is bound to be dislocation. I am here tonight to say that the Government is doing its utmost to mitigate this dislocation. . . . Our war effort is to be the maximum effort of the whole country. It will be not less than our war effort in 1918. In such an effort there will be no room for idle hands.

Gigantic programmes are every day gathering momentum. I study them, and I am certain that at no distant date there is scarcely an able-bodied man or woman whose services the country will not need. Be patient, therefore, if you have sought war work and have not yet found it. The war work will soon be seeking you. . . .

Then, what about economy? By all means let us economize. The Budget next week will make us all economize and it is right that it should. But economy does not mean refusing to buy anything. We live by buying and selling.

### Wise Buying and Honest Selling

Go on buying and selling then, but when you buy, buy prudently, and pay your bills—to run off into the country and to leave your tradesmen unpaid in town is an act of desertion on the Home Front—and when you sell, avoid profiteering as you would the plague.

We must have no misers, no hoarders, and no profiteers. And there is something more to be said. We must not encourage the war obsession that sometimes leads excellent people into anti-social courses. Of course, the war adds a gigantic burden to those we already bear. But our people are of so fine a temper that they will carry this extra burden and yet maintain the kindly good nature and common sense of the British character.

I think of the spirit with which the women in the country villages have already received the refugees from the towns. The country women and the villagers have done splendidly. We all give them our thanks and our congratulations.

And, true to British tradition, they are facing these troubles with a smile and a joke. Every district and village has already its budget of funny stories about the great dispersal.

This British spirit of good humour is going to dissipate the darkness of the black-out. It is going to help the employer and his employee, the trader and his customer to carry on with a cheerful face.

And behind it is another support that always seems to stand out more clearly in times of strain and stress, the prop and stay of good companionship. For, faced with the great issues of life and death, we gather together as one family. Where yesterday each was intent on his own affairs, today a common purpose has created a real community of feeling.

As a Minister of the Crown I see the typists, the telephone girls, the Post Office officials, the messengers, working as if they were the Prime Minister himself in their determination to help their country in the hour of its need.

You see the same spirit wherever you go in your own walk of life. This is a spirit that cannot be quenched. This is a will to win that cannot be defeated.

And when behind it all is the Maginot Line of faith in the great moral verities, of faith held by Christians, Jews, Moslems, Hindus and Buddhists in a unique alliance of the world's believers, such as has never before been known in history, you and I can then face with steadfast fortitude and cheerful confidence the dark nights, the vexations of war, the air raids, the partings, for we know that we shall win, and we are certain that we shall see the triumph of faith over the brute force of the new paganism.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, SEPTEMBER 26, 1939:

IT may be of interest to the House and to the country if I make my main theme today the development of some of the vast undertakings, vital to the winning of the war, now being entered upon on the Home Front, and the repercussions of these undertakings upon the national life.

Let me begin with a short account of the work of the Ministry of Economic Warfare. This Department will perform, broadly speaking, the functions which were carried out in the last war by the Ministry of Blockade; but whereas this last Ministry was not set up until 1916, the Ministry of Economic Warfare has been under organization for the past two years, and the complete staff necessary to run it was selected many months ago.

The general object of the Ministry is to disorganize Germany's economic structure to such an extent as to make it impossible for her to carry on the war. For every man in the front line you must have many behind the lines, engaged in the production and servicing of the weapons of war, and if Britain can prevent Germany from importing the raw materials essential for the functioning of her war industries the result will be effectively to cripple her power to prolong hostilities. . . .

In its effects upon the life of the nation the great change that is now taking place in the scope and purpose of industry is all important. Practically the whole force of our industry has now to be concentrated, directly or indirectly, on war needs. . . . If this great task is to be carried through successfully the co-operation of the workpeople themselves is the first essential—and I take this opportunity of declaring that the Government are ready and anxious to take any steps that may be necessary to secure their good will. . . .

The full organization of the country's resources requires more than machinery for the regulation of working conditions and of employment, and it is the view of the Government that the support of both employers' and workers' organizations is essential if this country is to put forth its maximum effort. . . .

### Loyalty and Support of the Trades Unions

THE trades unions, which have agreed, under proper safeguards, to relax their normal conditions, have saved us from the difficulties which confronted us in the last war, and have made a contribution for which the whole country is grateful. There is, in fact, no country in which the Government is assured of more organized assistance than that at our disposal.

Finally, I wish to say a word to the House, and through the House to the country, about our general attitude towards the war. No one can doubt that, in modern warfare, it is upon the determination, courage and endurance of ordinary men and women that victory ultimately depends. No one familiar with conditions in this country can have any doubt as to where we stand in these respects. Never have our people been more united or more determined. They are resolved—and the simple fact cannot be too often stressed—to rid themselves once for all of the perpetual threat of German aggression, of which Poland is only the latest instance. We and France entered the war to rid ourselves of that menace, and our peoples are united as they have been united before in their resolve to achieve

Chapter 25

# THE HOME FRONT, SECOND PHASE: CO-ORDINATION AND READJUSTMENT

*A Vast Organization called into Being—Colossal Expenditure on A.R.P.—Bureaucracy 'Under Fire'—The New Ministries and How they Functioned—Over-zealous Control of Commodities—Rationing and Price Fixing—Stupendous War Budget—Passing on the Burden—Defence of the Realm Act*

In the anticipation of daily and all-day air raids, and the consequent complete dislocation of civil life in Britain, from the moment of declaration of war, the Government naturally and rightly created a vast organization, which for want of a better term may be called the "Home Front," to cope with the difficulties and dangers foreseen by them. Fortunately for the country, and unfortunately for the organization, the expected offensive did not take place; the result was that millions of persons engaged by the State on generous terms were without work. It was not long before County Councils, Borough Councils, Ratepayers' Associations, and other bodies of a like nature, began to protest at the colossal amount of expenditure on the Home Front. No one could deny that the A.R.P. wages list, for instance, was on the excessive side; no one could deny, either, that 999 was a fantastic figure for the number of employees whom the Ministry of Information housed.

The outcome of protests in Press and Parliament was that the month of October, 1939, was largely devoted, in so far as the Home Front was concerned, to the reduction and readjustment of much of the organization that had been set working during the previous month.

The Services and their auxiliaries were not, of course, in question. The argument of over-expense, over-staffing and muddle was directed almost solely against the A.R.P. organization, the vast new bureaucracy that had been created with the formation of new Ministries of the Crown, and the blunders that had unquestionably occurred in putting the evacuation scheme into operation—not so much the evacuation of mothers and children as that of hosts of Civil Servants, to make room for whom hundreds of country hotels, schools and houses had been light-heartedly commandeered in the name of the State.

**Critics Raise Their Voices**

It must be said for the authorities that they were not very backward in admitting the cogency of the argument, though they were not always as ready to accept responsibility for the facts complained of. There was little rancour shown by either side; if they had wished to do so the Government could, under Emergency Orders for the Defence of the Realm passed without a division and apparently without much thought by the Commons, have suppressed out of hand all discussion of the matter, and no one would have been any the wiser. But they did not do so. On the other hand, the critics, if they had wanted, could have quoted cases of mismanagement beyond all conception, could have pointed out instances of stupidity in high and low places alike, and could have ventilated grievances so thoroughly that the Government might have wilted before the storm that would have arisen. But the critics forbore to do so. It is not the British way to look for the worst even in what one is criticizing; and it is not wise to invite reprisals by the virulence of one's own attacks. The matters were therefore settled in an amicable manner; justice was ultimately done (more or less), and the unity of the country was not jeopardized by ill-advised action on the part of either attackers or defenders. In a word, British compromise reigned.



WARTIME HEADLAMPS

To comply with the black-out regulations all motor-car headlights had to be dimmed, and above is one of the approved official masks which replaced the makeshift and often inefficient ones previously used.

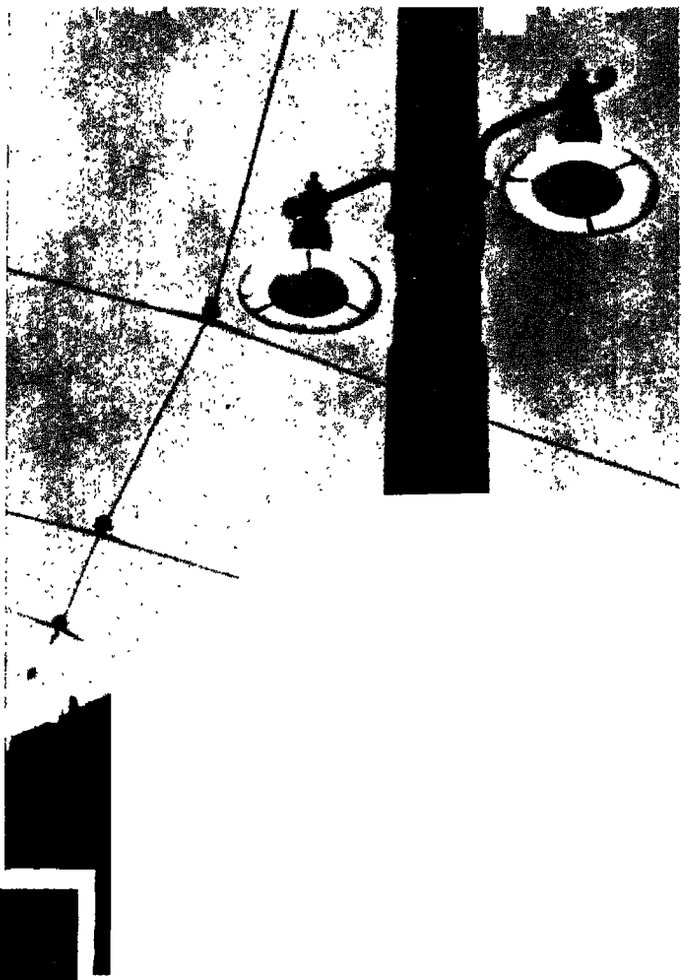
*Photo, Keystone*

There was, in fact, a revolution against "totalitarianism" in Britain during the second month of the war, because the expected totalitarian war had not yet materialized. Members of Parliament began to examine with more care the measures which they had unanimously passed in the early days of the war, and, in enjoyment of their present security, were horrified at what they saw—although, it must be emphasized, all these measures would have been essential if the war had taken its expected course. Ratepayers and local councillors, presented with the bill for the first month's A.R.P. salaries, were astonished and dismayed. The ordinary woman in the street, confronted with petty difficulties in obtaining the butter and sugar she required, began to grumble. The small trader and shopkeeper, hemmed in by restrictions on selling hours and faced with ruin and bankruptcy owing to the black-out and evacuation, openly revolted. Hotel-keepers in the provinces wailed; head-masters and -mistresses of country schools spoke sternly; and the hundred and one other classes of sufferers made their grievances heard. Letters to "The Times," post-cards to M.P.s, grew from a trickle to a stream, from a stream to a flood. By the end of the first week in October the offensive was on; but it was the home offensive, and it was directed against the Home Front. The Siegfried Line of Bureaucracy was under fire for the first time in the Second Great War.

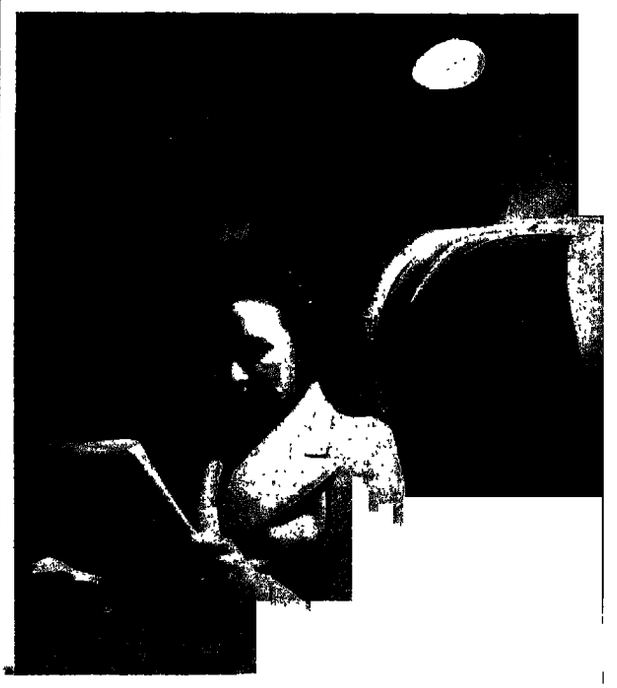
**Revolt Against Restrictions**

Let us now consider the details of the case, and the satisfactions obtained from the Government by the governed. But first a word about the means adopted by the masses in making their grievances heard. Too great praise cannot be given to the Press for the way in which it acted at this time; seriously, without party prejudice, with no attempt at sensationalism, but with a









**SOLVING PROBLEMS OF THE BLACK-OUT**

**The black-out brought many problems in its train, for which some solution was sought and usually found. Top left, a sensible pedestrian crosses the road at night wearing a white coat and carrying a newspaper. Above, an experiment in street lighting at Liverpool. The light cannot be seen over 30 feet from the ground. Left, a white-coated policeman at Trafford Bar, Manchester, where five roads meet, shepherds pedestrians across the road with a lantern. Below, a reading lamp of the type installed in main-line trains, the windows of which were blacked out.**

*Photos, Sport & General; Wide World; Fox; L.N.A.*



MUCH CENSURED CENSORSHIP

From the outbreak of war a strict (and occasionally futile) censorship was placed on the dissemination of news, and the Ministry of Information, the organization responsible for the distribution of news to the Press, encountered some fierce criticism. Above is a scene in the Press Room at the Ministry The Assistant Director, News Division, is seen at the microphone reading a bulletin to Press representatives.

*Photo, Photographic News Agency*

high conception of their duty as the only national organs of national opinion, the newspapers exposed but without glee, and criticized but constructively, the faults they saw in the structure. They bore a grave responsibility, but bore it nobly; in a word, the Press performed its high office high-mindedly

Secondly, there was the private member—the back-bencher M.P., who in normal times avoids rather than seeks to capture the Speaker's eye and whose best duty is done when he walks into the division lobby in strict obedience to the Whip's instructions. Now he came into his own; local interests were given a hearing in the Commons in place of vested interests, and the man in the street began really to feel that he was represented in the Mother of Parliaments. Question time became the hour of greatest importance in the Commons, supplementary questions from both sides were so freely asked that the Government had to impose a time-limit. The House stood up for itself, and the member stood up for his constituency. Question time resembled the "harassing fire" which the French communiqués -hief event of the day on the Western Front. And the effect was similar: ministers were kept fully aware of criticism and were forced by publicity to take action—they were kept awake.

The fire was first directed against the expenditure by local authorities on A.R.P. salaries. The "Daily Express" pointed out that the annual wages bill for whole-time A.R.P. volunteers for the whole country would amount to a sum of £10,000,000 more than the pay of the whole Navy for 1938, £13,000,000 more than that of the Army, and £27,000,000 more than the R.A.F. wages bill. The "Daily Mail" investigated the A.R.P. salary list of Canterbury, a "safe" city of 25,000 inhabitants, and found that it totalled almost £600 a week, or more than £30,000 a year. The same paper also protested against muddle and inefficiency in the A.R.P. service, particularly in the matter of the requisitioning of vehicles for ambulances and the "contradictory orders" that were received by the A.R.P. staff from higher quarters. W. J. Brown, the Civil Service Clerical Association's secretary, protested in a long article in the "Daily Express" against the errors that had been made in the evacuation of Government employees, and the danger lest the public servant should become the public's master.

Bureaucracy rightly came in for hard knocks from every quarter, the most notable examples of these attacks being those made upon the unfortunate *Ministry of Information*, with its 999 employees.

**The New Ministries**

The result of an intensive campaign against waste and inefficiency by the newspapers was a wholesale reduction in the staff of this institution; but other new ministries, which came less into the public eye, continued in the same state of "overstaffedness." These new concerns, brought into existence to fight the war on the Home Front, included the Ministry of Economic Warfare, Ministry of Shipping, and Ministry of Food. The Shipping Minister was Sir John Gilmour, and his appointment gave rise to much harsh criticism; the Food Minister was Mr. W. S. Morrison, who was also later under fire in connexion with rationing schemes. The Ministry of Supply (under Mr. Leslie Burgin), according to certain newspapers and some business men, fell far short of success, but to the public it seemed to be one of the more efficient of the new wartime bodies

On the question of Home Security (Sir John Anderson's department) there



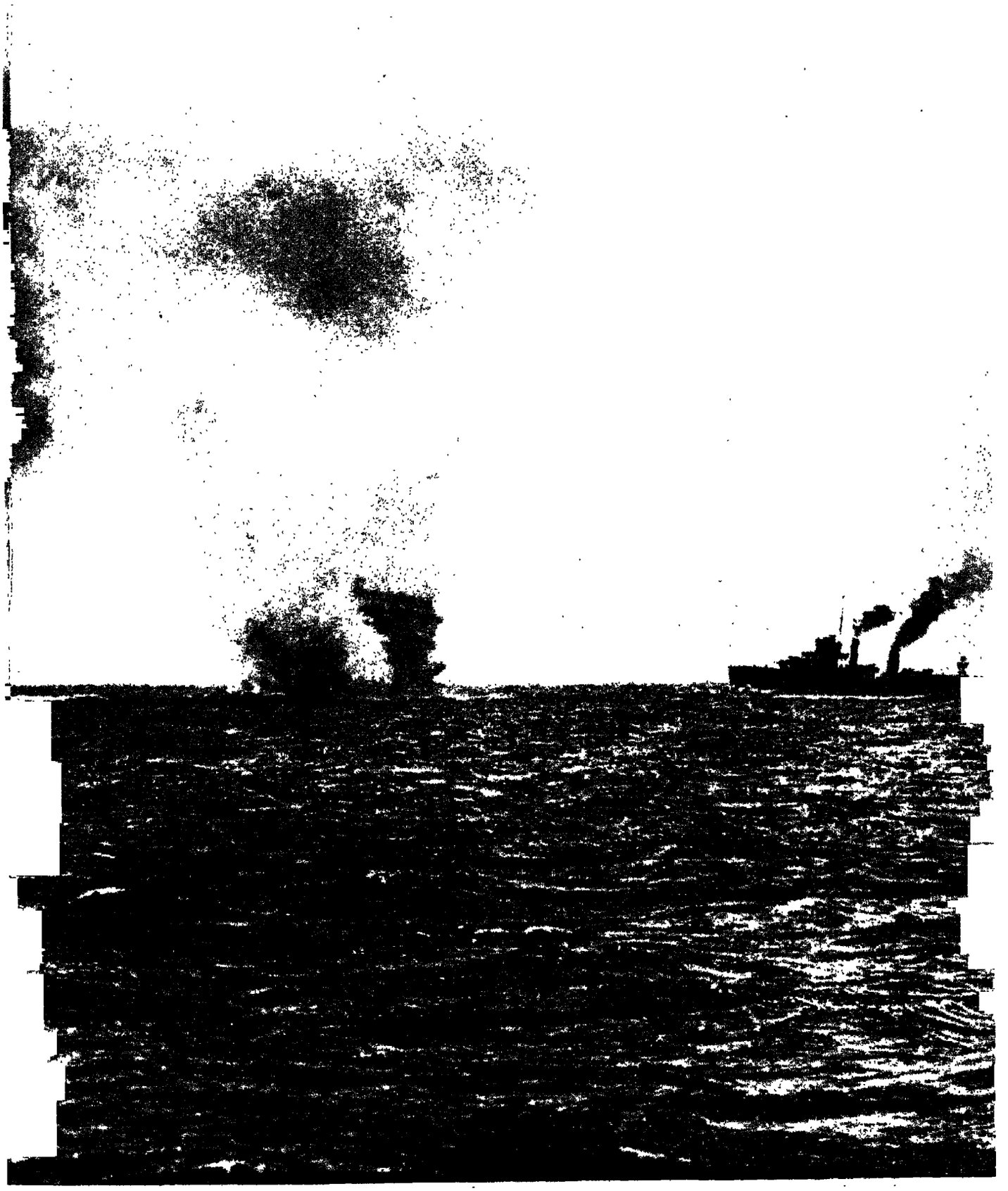
*Photo, Planet News*

## FIRE-FIGHTERS AT EXERCISE ON THAMES-SIDE

This striking photograph shows a battery of powerful hoses in operation beside the Thames in the neighbourhood of the Tower Bridge on November 4, 1939, during the course of the greatest fire-fighting exercise ever planned in the City of London. More than three thousand officers and men, together with seven hundred pumps and a number of fire-floats, took part in this impressive demonstration of the efficiency of London's fire-fighting services, regular and auxiliary.



DESTROYERS PUT THE U-BOAT IN CONSTANT FEAR:
The most formidable weapon against hostile submarines is the depth charge, as U-boats discovered in the last war. It consists of a thin-walled cylindrical container, rather like an oil-drum, in which is a high-explosive charge and a firing mechanism. The charges can be either dropped overboard or fired from a special gun resembling a trench-mortar, as shown in page 234. The Photo,



**THE HUNTERS DROP THEIR DEPTH CHARGES**

depth charges are sunk so as to form a ring of explosions around the spot where the submarine is judged to be, and the firing mechanism can be adjusted to function at a pre-determined depth. Some idea of the destructive force of these charges may be gathered from the great columns of water which they throw up on exploding, as seen in the photograph above.

*Central Press*



*British Official Photograph: Crown copyright*

**LEADERS OF GREAT BRITAIN IN TIME OF WAR**

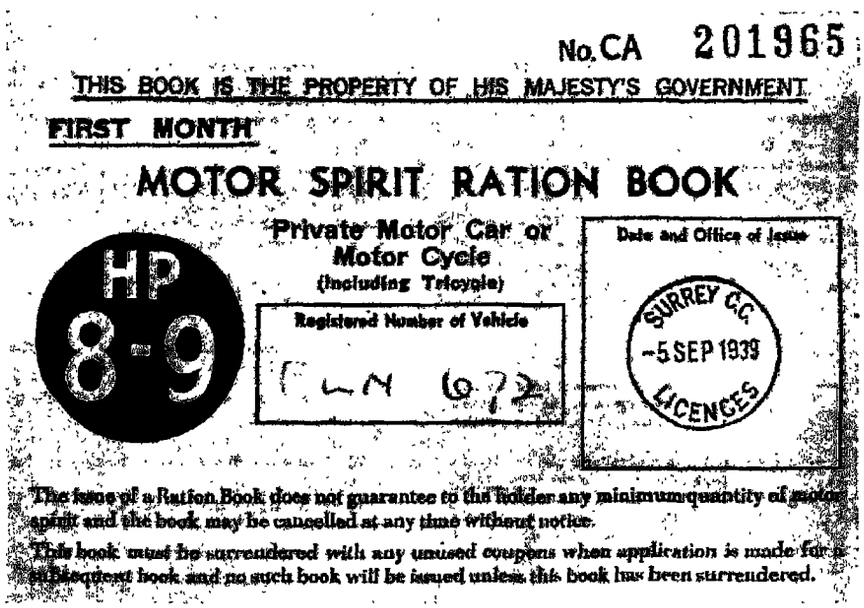
The members of Britain's War Cabinet—Standing (left to right): Sir John Anderson, Home Secretary and Minister for Home Security; Lord Hankey, Minister without Portfolio; Mr. Leslie Hore-Belisha, War Minister; Mr. Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty; Sir Kingsley Wood, Air Minister; Mr. Anthony Eden, Minister for the Dominions; Sir Edward Bridges, Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the War Cabinet. Sitting (left to right): Viscount Halifax, Foreign Secretary; Sir John Simon, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Mr. Neville Chamberlain, Prime Minister; Sir Samuel Hoare, Lord Privy Seal; Admiral of the Fleet Lord Chatfield, Minister for the Co-ordination of Defence.

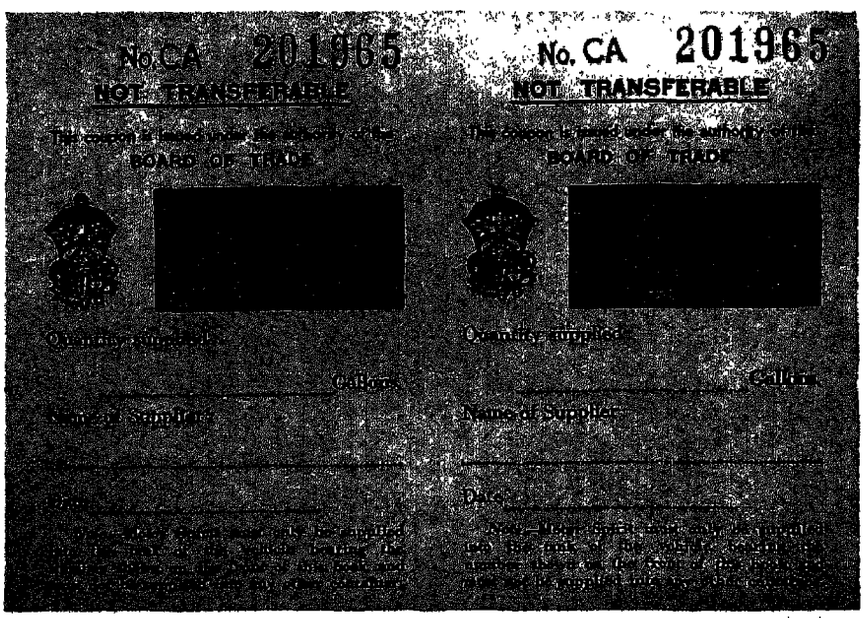
were many outspoken critics. The lighting regulations were attacked vigorously by motorists; and, indeed, the "black-out" in the first two months was responsible for more casualties in Britain than occurred on both sides of the Western Front. An official headlamp mask was designed, but was not put on sale until after a very long delay, and in the meantime motorists became so bewildered by instructions and counter-instructions that many of them returned to pre-war lighting without apparent penalty. The complete darkness on trains caused many protests, and at the end of October experiments were conducted with a view to enabling travellers to be able to read on the railways; as a result certain main-line trains were provided with brighter lighting in the early days of November. Suburban trains remained black, and 80 per cent at least of daily travellers enjoyed no more light than before.

**Rationing In Action**

In their praiseworthy eagerness to place the country on a full war footing at the earliest possible date, the Government admittedly overreached themselves in the restriction of goods and services. It had been assumed that distribution would be completely disorganized as the result of air raids, and the most elaborate schemes had been laid down for use immediately war was declared. In the period under review none of these was, as it happened, required. Rationing was fully prepared; foodstuffs of all kinds and fuel of every nature were to be restricted. Indeed, the rationing of petrol was introduced from the very first, although it was said that vast stocks and comparatively undiminished imports later made it unnecessary. Coal and coke were likewise rationed to 75 per cent of the usual consumption, as were also gas and electric light; but these restrictions were lifted in October and early November, consumers being allowed their normal consumption. In the second week of November the first food ration books were issued, but although they contained coupons for every kind of foodstuff, only bacon and butter were to be rationed, and that at a future date left unnamed. Four ounces per head per week of each commodity was the amount announced by the Food Minister, but larger quantities were to be granted to manual labourers. This was, surprisingly, approximately the same ration as obtained in Germany for butter and bacon, although the Ministry of Information pointed out that the German butter contained much water. It should here be noted that German coupons were seldom able to be called.

In response to criticism of its economic activities, the Government appointed on October 10 an Adviser on Economic Co-ordination to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Committee, in the person of Lord Stamp. This was the main concession paid to the constant demands of professional economists for a reasonable and reasoned economic policy; but it appeared that this was only an honorary and part-time post for Lord Stamp, who remained chairman of the L.M.S. Railway. Thus it was made clear that any but an *ad hoc* policy was not being considered by the Government. This was perhaps wise, in view of the unforeseeable nature of future events; the Government, naturally, did not wish to bind itself to any declared economic policy which might be completely overthrown by some happening at a later date. But it was felt that the appointment was a sign of weakness as implying that the full economic implications of war had not been foreseen. The economic machine of the country was "tinkered with"; it was not put into proper running order. Slowness in granting licences for import and export, downright incompetence in handling marine insurance risks, seemingly unnecessary disparity in freightage charges between




**MOTORISTS ON SHORT COMMONS**

So vast is the quantity of petrol consumed by modern mechanized armies that fuel for the private motorist was stringently rationed as soon as war broke out. Above is shown the [illegible] coupons of the British Motor Spirit Ration Book, as issued by the Board of Trade [illegible] private cars and motor cycles.

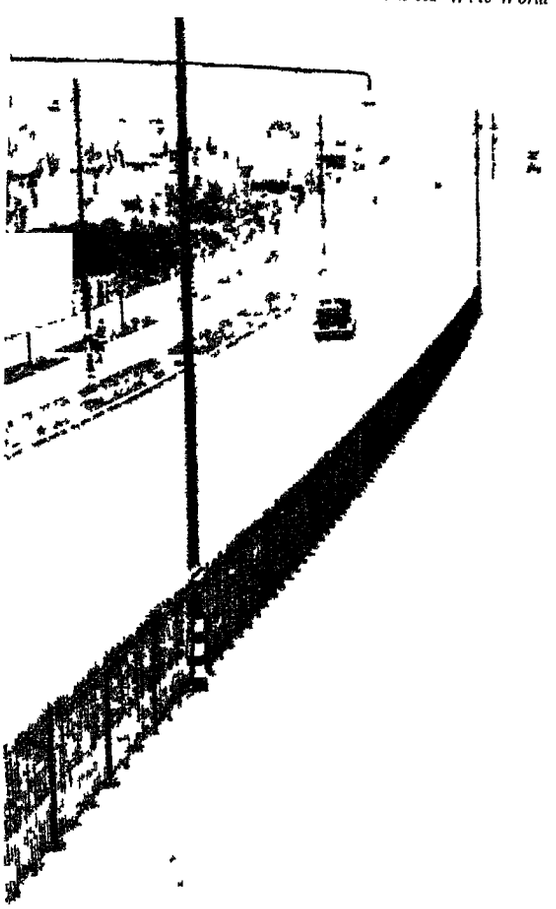


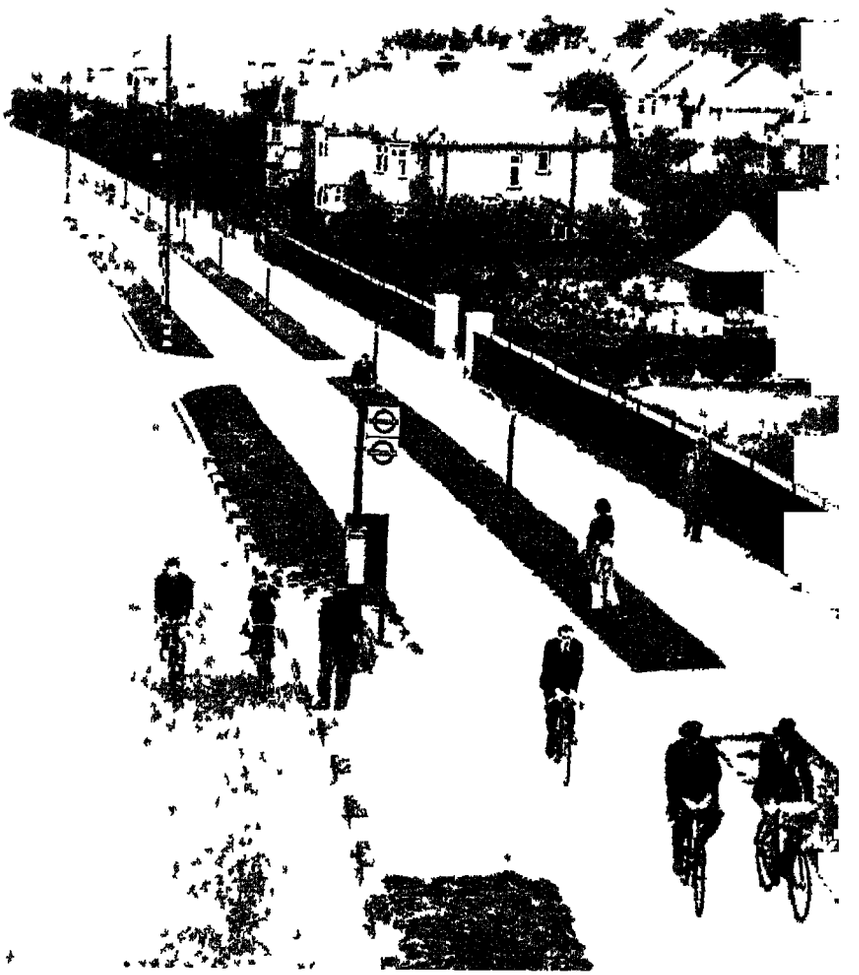


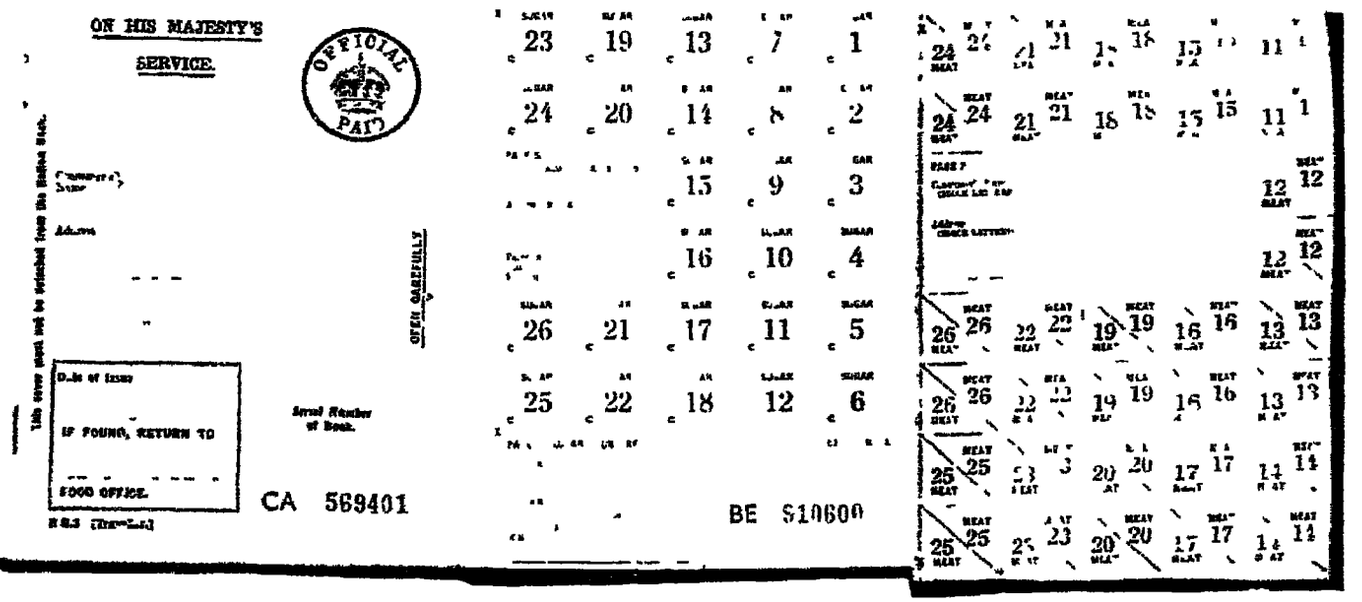

## HOW THE ROADS WERE EMPTIED BY PETROL RATIONING

The rationing of petrol which came into force on the outbreak of war forced the majority of cars, save those used for essential business purposes, off the roads and the streets of London presented an unusually peaceful appearance Our photographs show (left) Fleet Street with a group of people waiting for one of the infrequent buses, (right) Sunday afternoon in Whitehall, and (below) the normally crowded Great West Road

*Photos Wide World Sport & General Associated Press*








British and neutral shipping, and, worst of all, increasing unemployment—these were some of the problems which had not been faced with sufficient foresight two months or more after the declaration of war

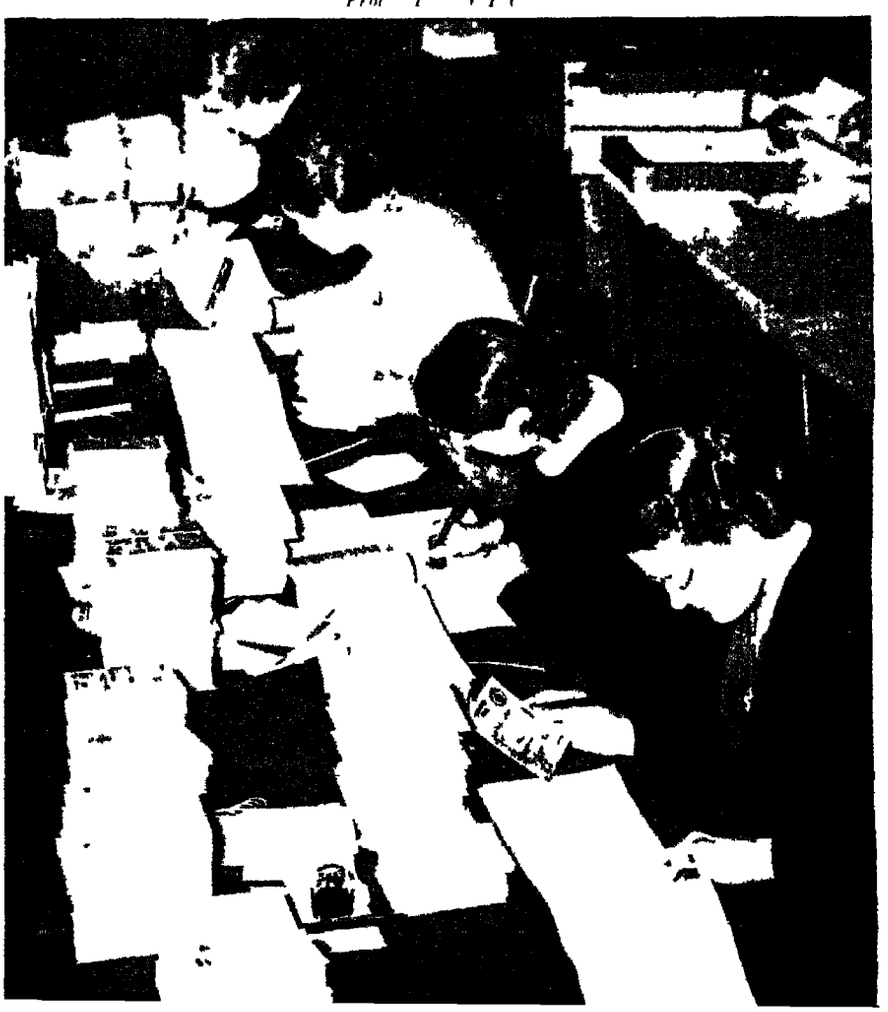
A certain dogged resistance on the part of the man in the street to unnecessary interference with personal liberty was soon noticeable during the second phase of the Home Front war Perhaps it was seen at its best—that is to say at its strongest and most reasonable—in the opposition that met the shop closing "curfew" introduced in early November The Government order was that shops were to close at 6 30 p m on ordinary days and 7 p m on Saturdays, but from the first the order was openly flouted, and local authorities soon amended it (as they were permitted to do) to suit local conditions The L C C set a standard by fixing 7 p m as "closing time" on ordinary days, and boroughs contiguous to the L C C area were almost forced to follow suit Similarly, the Government's "pooling" systems for tea and margarine were dropped, as a result of persistent and outspoken criticism

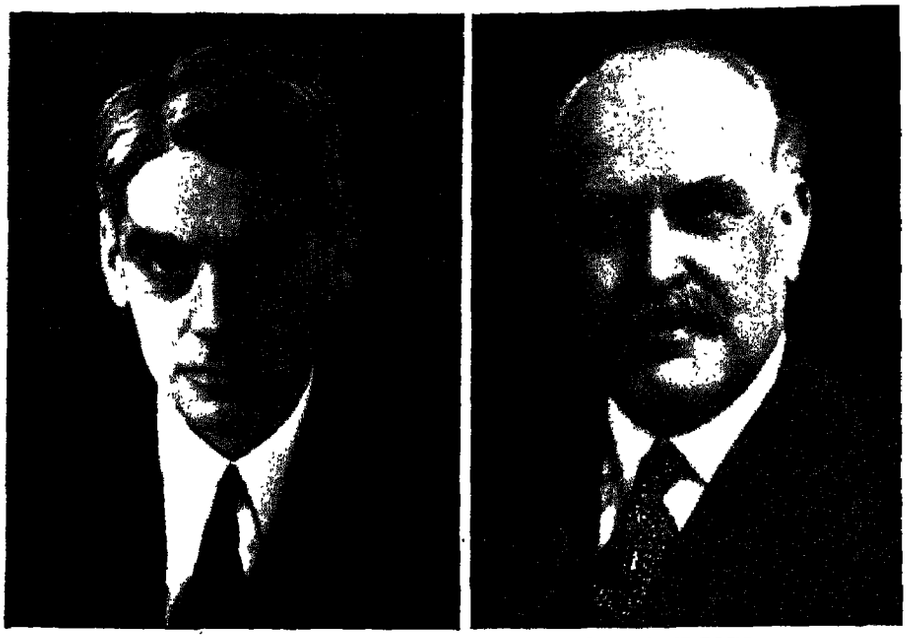
On financial questions there was less criticism because there was less knowledge Thus Sir John Simon's £2,000,000,000 War Budget, introduced on September 27, passed almost without comment—save for the patriotic remark that everyone would "grin and bear" the increase of a penny a pint on beer, eighteenpence a bottle on whisky, a penny a packet on cigarettes, a penny a pound on sugar (all of which were passed on *in toto* to the consumer), the

**PREPARATIONS FOR FOOD RATIONING**

National Registration as related in Chapter 7, took place on September 29 1939 Soon afterwards ration books were issued in preparation for the rationing of foodstuffs Below, girls are seen preparing the books from the National Registration forms at the Food Executive Offices in London Above ration books for (left) traveller (centre) child and (right) adult

*Photo*





**LEADERS OF ACTION ON THE HOME FRONT**

**The Rt. Hon. W. S. Morrison (left), formerly Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, was appointed head of the Ministry of Food at the outbreak of war. Lord Stamp (right), a Director of the Bank of England and Chairman of the L.M.S. Railway, became Adviser on Economic Co-ordination to a committee of ministers under the chairmanship of the Chancellor of the Exchequer**

*Photos, Vandyk ; Lafayette*

reductions in the family man's allowances. The £107,000,000 so raised by extra taxation was a mere fraction, however, of the money that would be required to finance the War; Sir John Simon reserved for a later date his announcement of the next vast defence loan which he would have to raise.

The effect of the Budget, and of compulsory air-raid risk insurance on wholesalers and retailers with stock of £1,000 or over, was to raise prices of everyday commodities ten, twenty or even thirty per cent. It was evident that some profiteering was taking place, and there was an immediate outcry, which had its result; many prices fell to almost normal "while existing stocks remain," as the shop windows stated, although the general rise in the cost of living was considered such as to warrant increases in wages to many thousands of workers at the instance of their trades unions. These included miners, railwaymen, the textile trades, agricultural labourers, electricians, dockers, pottery workers, garment makers, jute workers, and others.

**Rising Prices**

An aspect of price-fixing that came to the fore early in November was the tendency on the part of distributing and retailing trades to pass on to the consumer almost every farthing of the losses which the war entailed upon them. Thus the gas companies published an announcement in the daily papers that, owing to evacuation from London and other cities, the consumption of gas had fallen; therefore, it was implied, they were justified in raising the price of gas to those who remained in the cities in order to maintain the companies' profits. Gas rose by 2½d. a therm in the next few days. Similarly, the vast milk distributors gave as the reason for a proposed increase in London and the suburbs of ½d. per pint on the price of milk the fact that evacuation had seriously reduced their profits. They admitted—even proclaimed—that there was no shortage of milk; they even stated that there was such a surplus that they could hardly dispose of it. But the price must be raised in the already hard-hit evacuation areas to maintain the profits of the "combines."

The small retail shops in evacuation areas had no such powers; if they raised their prices their customers went elsewhere. Evacuation had damaged their trade to an extent immeasurably greater than it could harm the multiple store or combine, but they had no redress. The result was a large number of bankruptcies among small shopkeepers in the large cities, and it was no consolation to them to know that the village shops in country districts were enjoying an unprecedented "boom," equally as a result of evacuation. These were some of the various economic problems that remained untouched by the appointment of Lord Stamp as Adviser on Economic Co-ordination.

**Falling Profits**

On the credit side, the Government did not receive sufficient praise for its price-control of foodstuffs, which, though generally higher in price than before the

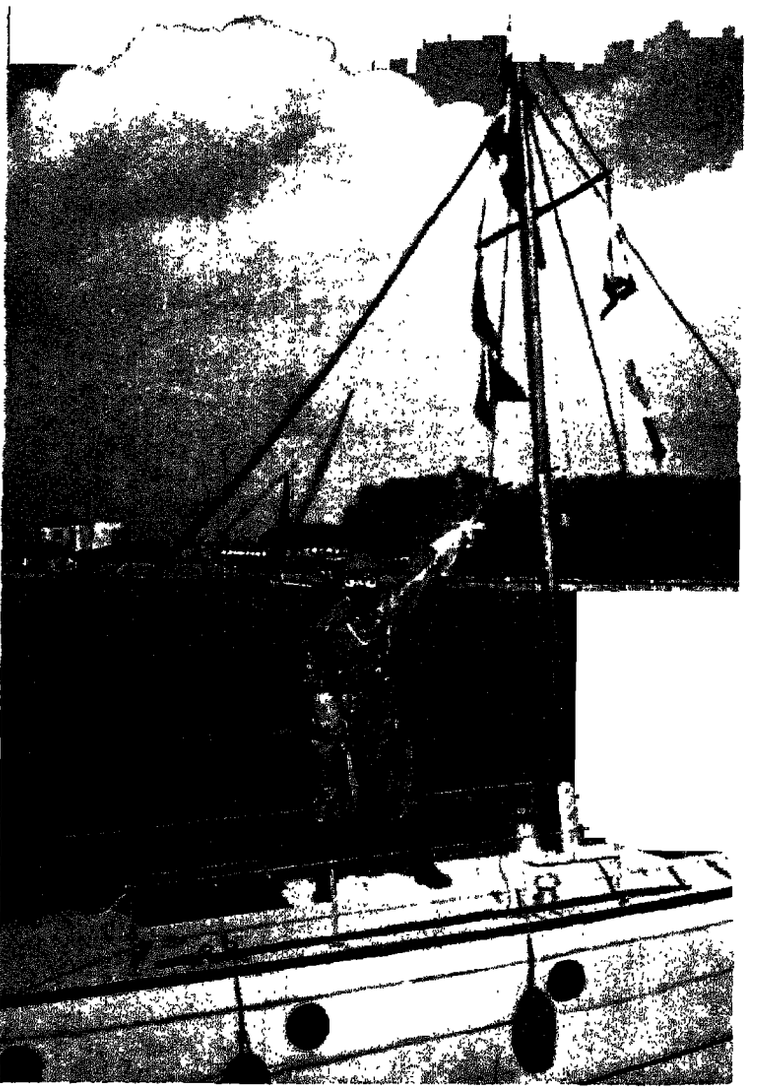


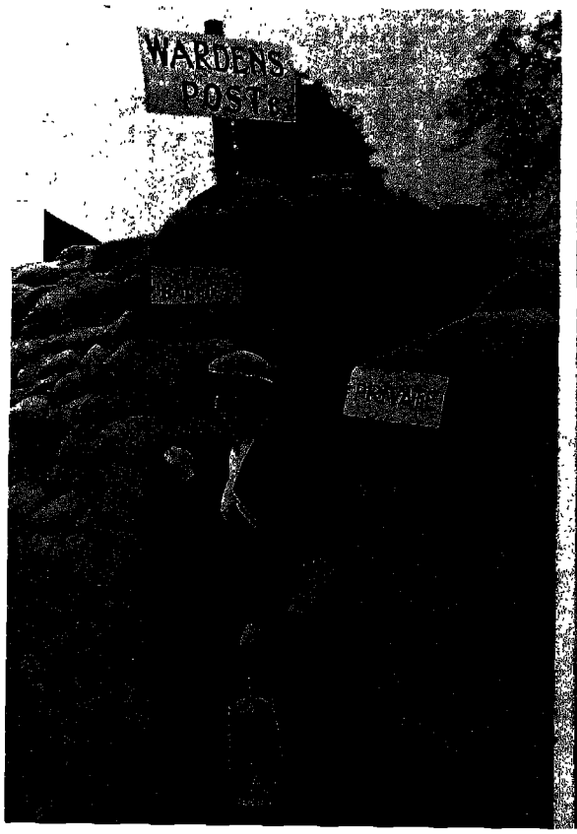
**DIRECTORS OF SHIPYARD ECONOMICS**

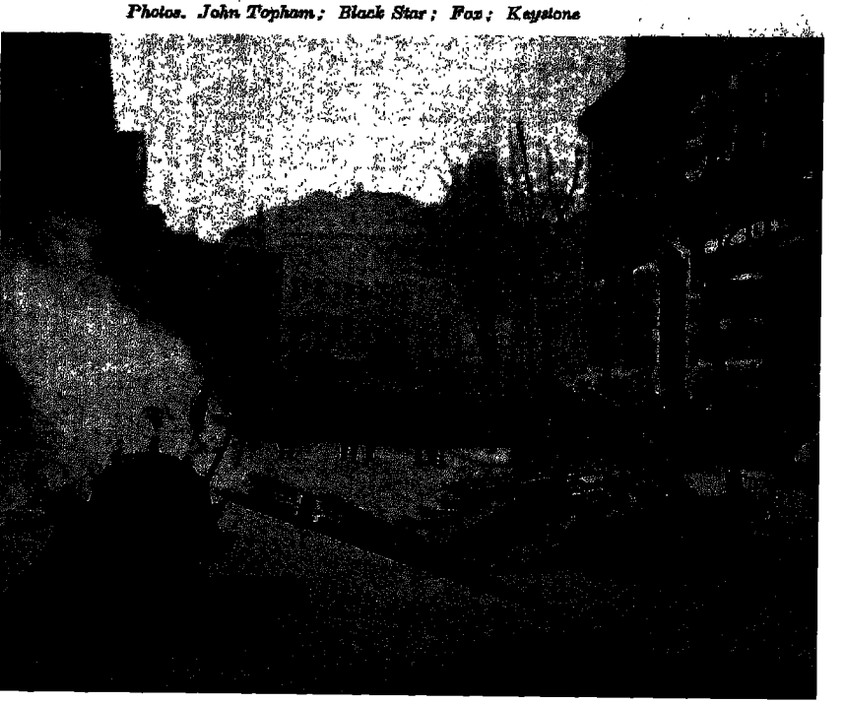
**The Rt. Hon. Sir John Gilmour (left), a former Home Secretary, was appointed Chief of the Ministry of Shipping on October 13, 1939. Sir Amos Ayre (right), an authority on naval architecture and Chairman of the Board of Trade Advisory Committee on Merchant Shipping, became Director of Shipbuilding and Repairs.**

*Photos, Elliott & Fry; Lafayette*







**BRITAIN PREPARES FOR THE WORST**

**Throughout Britain, Civil Defence measures were rehearsed and perfected as the war went on, and the country prepared itself for any emergency. Our photographs show, above left, the women's surgery at a Casualty Station at Erith, Kent; above, a patrol boat of the Emergency River Service; below left, an A.R.P. Warden on duty; below, an air-raid rehearsal at Bethnal Green.**

***Photos. John Topham; Black Star; Fox; Keystone***

war, were by no means beyond the pockets of the poorest. In one instance, indeed, the price was for a time kept lower than usual; English new-laid eggs, which normally rise to 3s. per dozen in October or November, were retailed for several weeks at 2s. 9d. by Government order. Meat was plentiful, and fish, in general, well distributed and cheap, after the first disorganization due to the closing of Billingsgate and Smithfield, the former of which national markets was soon reopened. Before rationing, indeed, the nation was in general well-fed and

**Food Prices Kept Down**

content; the physical well-being of the people was evidently—and wisely—the first concern of the Government.

An important aspect of the "lull" in the war which occurred in its first two months was that it afforded a splendid opportunity to test Britain's defence services. Important exercises were carried out in London and elsewhere by the A.F.S. and First Aid Services; imaginary air raids occurred at week-ends, imaginary conflagrations were efficiently extinguished and imaginary casualties expertly transported and treated. These tests were of the greatest value and revealed to a gratified populace how efficient their Home Front defences had become.

The Second Phase of the Home Front war was thus a period of co-ordination and adjustment. Reorganization was called for, but not undertaken for fear that the sudden bursting of the bombshell of "real" warfare might find the country in the midst of a "changing-over" process. Improvements in the organization took place in large numbers, and criticism was at first welcomed. We may say that this period ended about the second week in November, when a movement against the continuous "nagging" of the Government by Press and public was inaugurated by a leading article in the "Daily Telegraph." The warning was timely; by that time criticism for criticism's sake was beginning to replace the former wise exposure of undemocratic practices.

The greatest triumph of the true critics had, moreover, already taken place This was the debate in the Commons, inaugurated by Mr. Dingle Foot for the Liberal Opposition, on the Emergency Defence Orders passed earlier. M.P.s on both sides of the House joined to force upon the Government the necessity for reviewing some of the entirely undemocratic powers which had been granted to them under the Defence of the Realm Act. These powers included the virtual abrogation of *habeas corpus* by the right to try "suspected persons" without confronting them with their accusers, and even to detain them without trial of any sort; the right to deprive "suspected persons" of the possession of "any specified article"; the right to suppress the expression of any opinion contrary to the "public interest," and, in a word, almost all the powers that the Nazi Party had had to fight for many years to obtain in Germany.

At first no hope of alleviation was held out by Sir John Anderson, the responsible Minister, but the debate then became so violent that Sir Samuel Hoare was forced to intervene with a promise that the whole matter should be reviewed in consultation with all parties. This was a generous offer, and the debate closed amicably. Once again British compromise had succeeded, and there was a reasonable hope that British liberties would be maintained. This was a momentous day in wartime history; the date was Tuesday, October 31. Mr. Dingle Foot proved himself a worthy champion of Democracy.






**DECENTRALIZING LONDON'S FOOD SUPPLIES**

On the outbreak of the war the central fish market was transferred from Billingsgate to various depots in the country, one of which was in this village (top) "somewhere in Surrey." The scheme proved impracticable and the distribution was resumed from Billingsgate. Smithfield, however, remained closed as a central meat market, and meat distribution was carried on from various decentralized localities, among them the South London meat depot seen above

*Photos, Fox*

Chapter 26

# THE MERCHANT NAVY: BRITAIN'S FOURTH LINE OF DEFENCE

*A Strong Mercantile Marine Essential to Britain's Security—The Merchant Ship Reserve—On September 3 the Merchant Navy took up its Wartime Function—Encounters with a Ruthless Foe—Defensive Arming of Shipping—Anti-Submarine Measures—Convoy System—Contraband Control Service—Losses and Gains Reviewed*



MERCHANT NAVY

The new badge for officers and men of the Merchant Service and Deep Sea Fishing Fleets

THROUGHOUT her long history the supremacy of Great Britain at sea has been a vital factor in the life of the nation. That is why, in peace as well as in war, the Royal Navy is constantly at work in all the seven seas, as much in the China Sea and the Pacific Ocean as in the English Channel or the North Sea. One of the prime duties of that strong Navy is the patrolling of the trade routes of the world, keeping them free for the long lines of merchant ships which carry Britain's exports to all parts of the world and bring home the foodstuffs and raw materials upon which the life of this island nation depends. A strong merchant navy is an absolute essential for a maritime Empire, and in times of war the Empire's reliance upon the Merchant Service is revealed in its deepest significance. Every soldier at home or abroad, every airman, every civilian, man, woman or child, depends for the food that keeps him alive on the men and officers of the Merchant Service, Britain's fourth line of defence.

Twenty-five years ago, in the last tragic conflict of arms in Europe, that fact was brought home beyond question. At the height of the unrestricted submarine campaign the British Empire was nearly brought to its knees because of the ravages the torpedoes made in the numbers of British merchant ships. Today the importance of the Mercantile Marine is even greater, for Britain's ability to feed her own people unhelped by overseas supplies is weaker.

In 1914 the British Merchant Navy was stronger in numbers and tonnage than in 1939, but it was not as well prepared for the war as it might have been. It was not until the war had been in progress for two years that adequate steps were taken for the protection of shipping and for the replacement of tonnage lost.

Things were very different in 1939 For some years shipowners and others had been bringing to the notice of the Government the signs of decline in the British merchant fleet, maintained as it is in peacetime exclusively by private interests. For years foreign Powers all over the world had been subsidizing ships under their flags, if indeed they were not altogether state-controlled, recognizing that their vessels were vital economic, if not defensive, weapons. British shipowners were unable to meet the competition of national treasuries out of their own private purses, and they urged upon the British Government the necessity, in the national interests, of a strong fleet under the Red Ensign.

At the beginning of 1939 the Government acted. The proposals embodied in the British Shipping (Assistance) Bill sanctioned grants and loans towards the cost of building new cargo vessels. As a result nearly 200 vessels were ordered or laid down in British shipyards in April and May of that year. The sale of British ships abroad was prohibited except by licence, and the Government itself bought suitable vessels to form a Merchant Ship Reserve At last the Government had given British shipping a guarantee that its national importance was fully recognized.

ALLIED SHIPPING WAR CASUALTIES

Total Losses of Merchant Vessels

| | Sept. 3–30 | | October | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No | Tons gross | No | Tons gross | No. | Tons gross |
| **British** | | | | | | |
| Passenger liners | 1 | 13,581 | 1 | 10,183 | | |
| Cargo liners | 5 | 27,401 | 6 | 41,446 | | |
| Cargo vessels | 18 | 69,416 | 9 | 29,232 | | |
| Tankers .. | 5 | 42,436 | — | — | | |
| Trawlers, tugs, etc. | 6 | 2,330 | 2 | 815 | | |
| *Total British* | 35 | 155,164 | 18 | 81,677 | 53 | 236,841 |
| French .. ... | 1 | 2,660 | 6 | 45,273 | 7 | 47,933 |
| *Total Allied* | 36 | 157,824 | 24 | 126,950 | 60 | 284,774 |
| Neutral... ... | 16 | 34,678 | 15 | 42,896 | 31 | 77,574 |
| *Total Losses* | 52 | 192,502 | 39 | 169,846 | 91 | 362,348 |

The Neutral ships sunk were: Danish (1; 0); Finnish (3; 2); Swedish (4; 3); Norwegian (4; 4); Soviet (1; 0); Belgian (0; 1); Greek (2; 4); Dutch (1; 1).

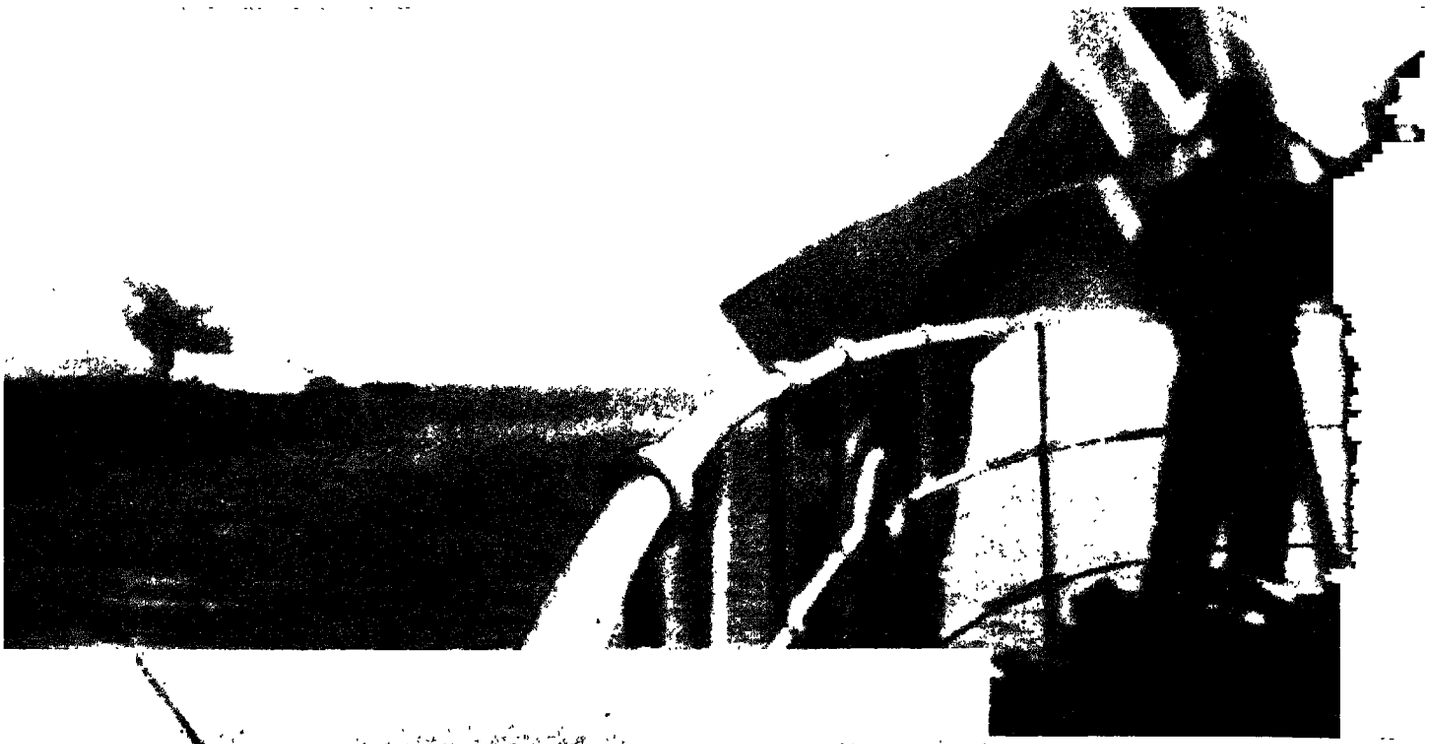
The British Admiralty had been under no illusions as to the importance of this matter. It had long been obvious that the German Navy's concentration upon the construction of submarines presaged a devastating campaign against British merchant shipping upon the outbreak of a future war; and ever since 1937 British merchant ships were having their decks strengthened to withstand the stresses set up by defensive guns, which were being prepared for them against the contingency of war. Almost all such vessels under construction during those two years had gun mountings embodied in their structure. Mr. Winston Churchill, the First Lord of the Admiralty, paid a sincere tribute in the House of Commons to the foresight of his predecessors in this respect.

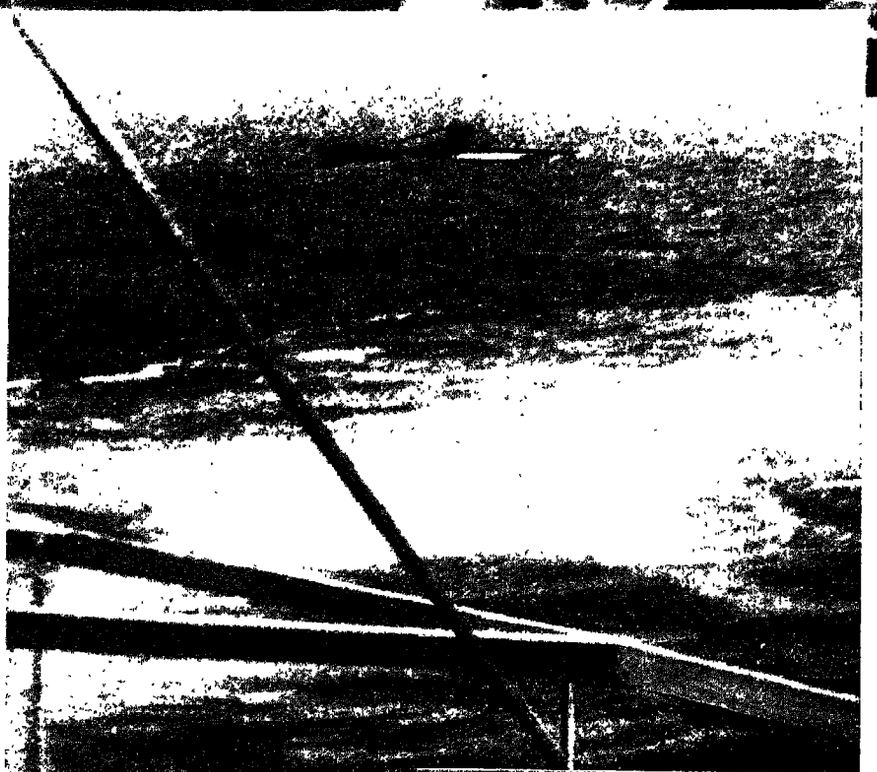
**Steps Against Submarines**

As soon as it became clear from the international situation that the chances of resort to war were great, the British Admiralty acted. At midnight on Saturday, August 26, British shipping came entirely under the control of the Admiralty. All information as to the movements of vessels was suppressed. The Merchant Navy became as silent as the Royal Navy; it became its corollary, the true function of the Merchant Service in time of war.

The Mediterranean and Baltic Seas had already been closed to British shipping as a precautionary measure, but now that the Admiralty entirely directed the voyages and use of British merchant vessels it could send them where it pleased. The ships of the Royal Navy were at their war stations, and the ships of the Merchant Navy were fulfilling their wartime functions.

According to the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act, passed by a special session of Parliament in a single day, and the Defence Regulations issued in pursuance of it, the Admiralty "by means of Navigation Orders may determine the movements, navigation, pilotage, anchorage, mooring, [illegible] and lighting of vessels prejudice to these









## BEFORE THE NAVY CURBED THE U-BOAT MENACE

During the first weeks of the war, while the U-boats were rampant, several merchant ships were torpedoed, among them the one shown in this page. Above, the Cunard cargo liner "Bosnia" being blown up by the U-boat seen in the photograph on the left. These pictures were taken by a member of the liner's crew from the Norwegian oil-tanker "Eidanger," which rescued them. Below, left, is the injured commander of the torpedoed "Goodwood" being wheeled from hospital, while beneath are seen some of the 37 officers and men of the "Winkleigh," rescued in mid-Atlantic after their ship had been sunk.

*Photos, Associated Press; Planet News*

of Trade was likewise empowered to control the movements of ships as it "considered expedient in the interests of the defence of the realm or the efficient prosecution of war, or for maintaining supplies and services essential to the life of the community.' Powers of requisition, both of property and of rights under contracts, were also granted to the Board of Trade. Thus, a ship which was hired to a firm for a certain length of time or for a particular voyage could immediately be commandeered, the Government taking over all the rights under the existing contract. Ships were immediately requisitioned for various purposes—large liners for conversion into armed auxiliary cruisers; cross-Channel vessels for troop-ships and hospital ships; trawlers and paddle steamers for minesweepers, and so on.

The whole system by which the shipping industry was normally run had to be completely reorganized to meet the new conditions Plans for this had been in existence for some time, and the transition from peace-time to war conditions was effected with the minimum of friction and the maximum of efficiency. As in the war of 1914–18, the Government undertook the insurance of ships against war risks, and the Government War Risk Office was opened to cover marine risks. This office operated alongside the usual business of Lloyd's, but the enormous organization of Lloyd's was itself completely rearranged on what was known as the pool system. In effect, all the underwriters and all the insurance companies combined their resources and appointed their individual representatives to underwrite marine risks on behalf of all the members of the pool.

**Government Insure Ships**

This system was adopted in anticipation of a colossal attack against British shipping. It was feared that the losses would be enormous at the outbreak of war and that the organization of business itself would be completely disrupted by disastrous air attacks on the City of London. Fortunately, as it turned out, neither of these eventualities was forthcoming, and before the first month was out the pool system was abandoned, although the skeleton organization was ready for instant adoption should matters later prove more serious. As the successes of the naval anti-submarine forces increased, there were striking reductions in the premiums asked for war risk insurance.

The business of chartering, normally undertaken by private brokers, members of the Baltic Exchange, was immediately transferred to about twenty chartering committees, composed mainly of the chartering personnel of the leading merchants. The Government issued a schedule of freight rates which it offered to shipowners for various voyages, and the schedule was subject to revision from time to time to take account of changing conditions and costs. The whole business was so successfully organized that, although there were some mistakes made at first, there was nothing but the best co operation between the shipping industry and the Government departments concerned. It was stated soon after the outbreak of the war by certain members of the industry that our shipping was already better organized than it was half-way through the last war.

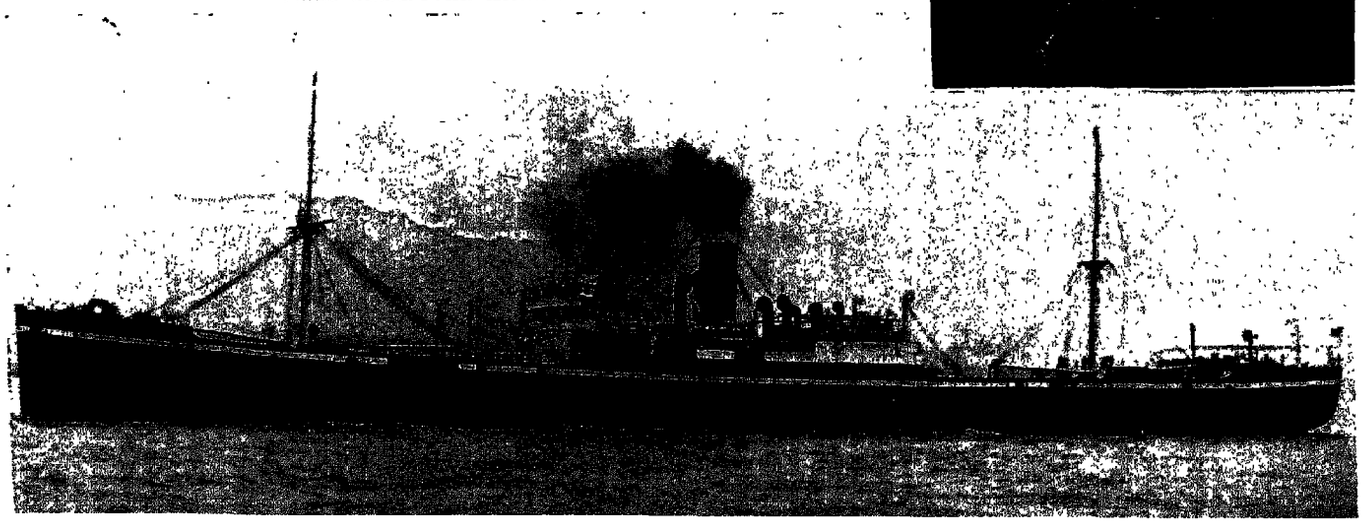
Thus the vital transition period from a peacetime to a wartime basis was virtually effected, without loss of efficiency, before hostilities started. That this was done so well is a lasting tribute to the foresight of the Government officials concerned and to the members of the shipping industry in its every ramification—an achievement the importance of which it is difficult for a layman to appreciate to the full.

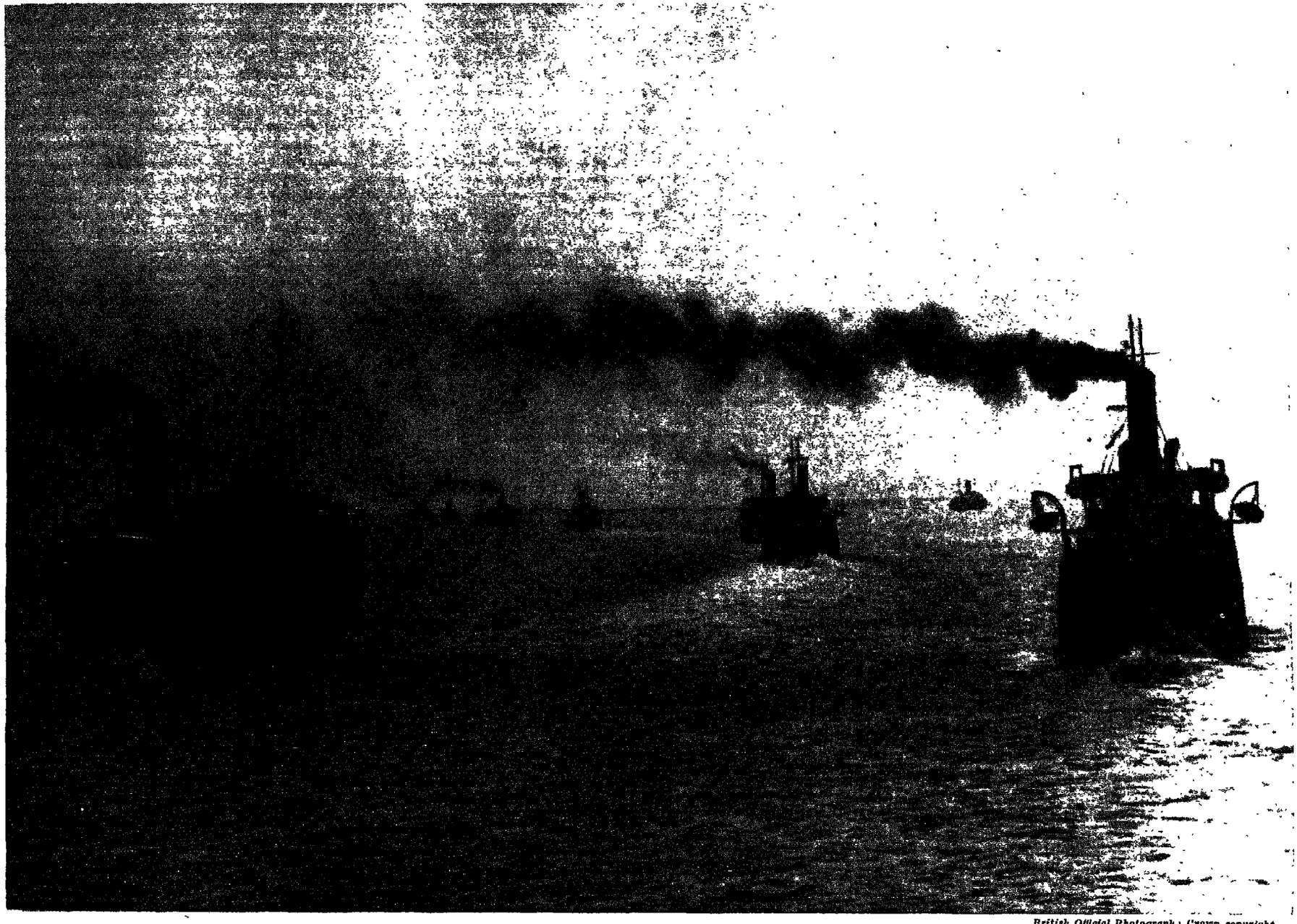


HERO OF THE TORPEDOED MANAAR

**The British cargo ship "Manaar" (below) was sunk by a German submarine on September 7, 1939. Her wireless operator, Mr. James Turner (right), displayed great gallantry in saving the life of a wounded Lascar at the risk of his own. The "Manaar" was torpedoed twice.**

*Photos Central Press; Associated Press*





British Official Photograph: Crown copyright

## CONVOY SYSTEM THAT FOILED THE U-BOATS

The convoy system for merchant shipping which proved so successful in the First Great War was, unfortunately, not adopted until the middle of 1917. In the Second, however, it was put into operation on the outbreak of war, and had an enormous effect in checking enemy submarine attack so that Britain's sea-borne transport could be maintained. This photograph shows a typical convoy well out at sea.

When war was declared on that Sunday morning of September 3, the whole organization was "on its toes," prepared for any eventuality. All the men and officers in the ships at sea had been long on the alert, keeping constant watch for the first sign of hostile activity. Then, in the middle of the first night, the first blow was struck by the enemy. The transatlantic liner "Athenia" was torpedoed by a German submarine 200 miles out in the Atlantic. Neutral vessels and British warships rushed instantly to the rescue, and the loss of life, though heavy, was minimized. (The full story is related in Chapter 10.) Public opinion, at home and in neutral countries, was horrified that the first victims of the U-boat campaign should have been mainly civilians—men, women and children, many of them of neutral nationality. The liner was outward bound, and therefore could not have been expected to be carrying munitions or any form of contraband to a belligerent country.

Realizing this error of policy, the German High Command tried to transfer the blame for the incident on to the shoulders of the First Lord of the Admiralty, representing that he had ordered a British warship to sink the "Athenia" in order to alienate neutral opinion against Germany. Such an amazing statement had the reception it deserved.

Then the news of sinking of other merchant vessels began to filter through to Britain. In the first week three cargo liners were torpedoed, six cargo vessels and two tankers —a total of 76,254 tons gross (including the "Athenia"). The losses in the first two weeks of the war were, by later standards, heavy, but they were not nearly as heavy as it was originally feared that they might have been. That they were so much heavier than in later weeks was due to many reasons. First, the U-boats had been out at their stations on the trade routes long before war was declared, lying in wait for the unarmed merchant vessels out on their lawful occasions; and, secondly, there was not time for the organization of the convoy system for homeward bound vessels. Ships which had started on their voyages home perhaps three weeks before the outbreak of war had to continue on their homeward way, running the gauntlet of submarines and minefields, without escort or the means of defence.

**Losses at Sea**

The episode of the "Mopan" illustrates graphically not only the situation in which many British merchant ships found themselves, but also the innate courage of the British seaman when faced with the perils of the sea. On the outbreak of war the "Mopan," a cargo vessel of 5,389 tons gross, was outward bound from Jamaica to Great Britain with a cargo of bananas. On September 6, at 1 p.m., when she was about 200 miles away from the English Channel, the look-out shouted: "Submarine on the starboard side." In a short time the U-boat was sending salvo after salvo towards the "Mopan," and when the shells began straddling the



**PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE**

*The Rt. Hon. Oliver Stanley, M.P., President of the Board of Trade and a son of Lord Derby, had previously held the posts of Minister of Transport, Minister of Labour, and President of the Board of Education.*

*Photo, Central Press*

ship, Captain Hugh Roberts steered a zigzag course, turning to port and to starboard with each alternate salvo. Fragments of the exploded shells came on board the vessel, but owing to the captain's skill in zigzagging no direct hits were scored. All the time the "Mopan" was steaming full speed ahead, her nominal speed being 13½ knots. The submarine, compelled to give chase, had to confine her firing to her forward guns. Down in the engine-room the engineers forced up every ounce of steam, with the result that the ship was soon travelling at 15 knots and gradually outdistancing her pursuer. The gunfire from the submarine continued for more than half an hour, by which time the "Mopan" had increased her lead to nearly 7,000 yards. Gradually the "Mopan" increased her speed until by 4 p.m. she was travelling at 16½ knots, three knots faster than her nominal speed. The U-boat was by that time nearly four miles astern and gave up the chase. For his valour and determination in defeating the submarine attack with an unarmed ship, Captain Roberts was awarded the Order of the British Empire.

Captain Roberts shares with Mr. James Turner the distinction of winning the first awards to merchant seamen of the war. Mr. Turner was the radio operator of the Brocklebank liner "Manaar," which was attacked without warning by a U-boat in the Atlantic on September 7. Although the ship was still under gunfire, he refused to leave the vessel until two lascar seamen (one wounded slightly, the other severely) could be rescued. He tried to lower a lifeboat, but the falls jammed and then suddenly ran out, so that the boat crashed into the water and filled. He put the severely wounded man in another boat, which was blown to pieces. The gallant operator then jumped into the water and towed the waterlogged boat alongside the ship so that the wounded lascar could get in. Later they were picked up by the master's boat. For this deed, Mr. Turner was awarded the Empire Gallantry Medal. Both the "Mopan" and the "Manaar" were unarmed merchant ships, homeward bound on the outbreak of war. The conduct of their officers and men could afford no more striking proof that the personnel of the Merchant Service had not lost one jot of that courage and daring which were so outstanding in the last war. That courage goes far to the assurance of victory, as His Majesty the King pointed out in his message to the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets:

**Medals for Heroes**

> In these anxious days I would like to express to all officers and men in the British Merchant Navy and the British Fishing Fleets my confidence in their unflinching determination to play their vital part in defence. To each one I would say: Yours is a task no less essential to my people's existence than that allotted to the Navy, Army, and Air Force. Upon you the nation depends for much of its foodstuffs and raw materials and for the transport of its troops overseas. You have a long and glorious history, and I am proud to bear the title "Master of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets." I know that you will carry on your duties with resolution and with fortitude, and that the high and chivalrous traditions of your calling are safe in your hands.
>
> God keep you and prosper you in your great task.

The President of the Board of Trade replied:

> The President of the Boa with his humble duty, ha

nform Your Majesty that he is transmitting Your Majesty's gracious and inspiring message to the officers and men of the British Merchant Navy and the British Fishing Fleets, and humbly begs on their behalf to express their grateful appreciation and their determination to prove worthy of Your Majesty's confidence Whatever difficulties and dangers may beset their calling, they are firmly resolved to play their part in maintaining the operations of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets and thus to make their contribution to the achievement of victory They will be strengthened in this resolve by the inspiration of Your Majesty's message and by the renewed assurance which it gives of Your Majesty's unfailing interest in all that concerns the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets.

In the second week of the war the osses at sea continued to be serious. Convoys had been arranged for outward-bound ships, but it had not yet been possible to organize homeward-bound vessels in convoys. Before the end of the second week, however, the convoy system was in full operation. Homeward-bound vessels were instructed to meet at rendezvous out in the Atlantic, where they were picked up by British and French warships and escorted to Allied shores. Here they were handed over to other escort vessels, and the Atlantic " chaperons " took over an outward convoy. Aircraft of the Coastal Command played a large part in the work of convoying merchant vessels round British coasts, for a vigorous campaign against the U-boat was waged from the air as well as from the surface.

Merchant shipping in this war is open to a danger to which it was not exposed in 1914–18—namely, attack from the air. Several times convoys were attacked by Nazi warplanes in the North Sea, but on each occasion the enemy was repulsed, with severe losses, by fighters of the Coastal Command and by anti-aircraft fire from the escorting warships Not a single hit had in the first three months of the war been scored on any vessel, merchantman or warship proceeding in convoy.

The protection of merchant shipping round the British coastline devolves almost entirely on the Royal Navy's destroyers and escort vessels; on the Coastal Command of the Royal Air Force; and on the great fleet of fishing vessels and sundry craft, manned by Royal Naval Reservists, which day and night patrols the seas, sweeping them for mines and clearing them for shipping. Hundreds of trawlers were taken over by the Navy and fitted out as minesweepers, as well as all sorts of private yachts, paddle steamers and other craft. The work of the fishing fleets and those who man them cannot be given too much prominence. They do the " dirty work " of the Navy, and release regular warships for duties to which such vessels are more suited.

The success of these anti-submarine measures can be gauged by an examination of the rate of losses by enemy action. In the month of September 35 British ships, totalling 155,000 tons gross, were lost by torpedo, mine, and submarine gunfire. In the first week of October only one vessel, of 876 tons gross, fell victim to enemy action. The later weeks of the month saw an intensification of the submarine campaign, and the two " pocket " battleships, " Deutschland " and " Admiral Scheer," had found their way out into the high seas to prey on merchant ships, yet the total losses reported for the month amounted only to 18 ships, of 81,000 tons gross, little more than half the total for the previous month

**U-Boats Conquered**

The figures are insignificant when compared with the losses in the last war. At the height of the unrestricted submarine campaign, in April, 1917, British losses amounted to over 545,000 tons. At the beginning of the war, in September, 1939, British shipping totalling 18,500,000 tons was afloat, and at the end of October only 1½ per cent had been lost, while at the same time the graph of losses showed a steady decline. Only one week after the convoy system was brought into operation 1,485 ships, of 3,679,000 tons gross, entered or cleared from ports of the United Kingdom without damage.

## CONVOYED FROM THE SKY

**A convoy, such as that seen in page 272, is protected not only by ships of the Royal Navy, but also by aircraft, which, from their height, can easily spot a submarine near or on the surface of the sea Below, a Fairey " Swordfish " is seen on convoy work.**

*Photo, Wide World*



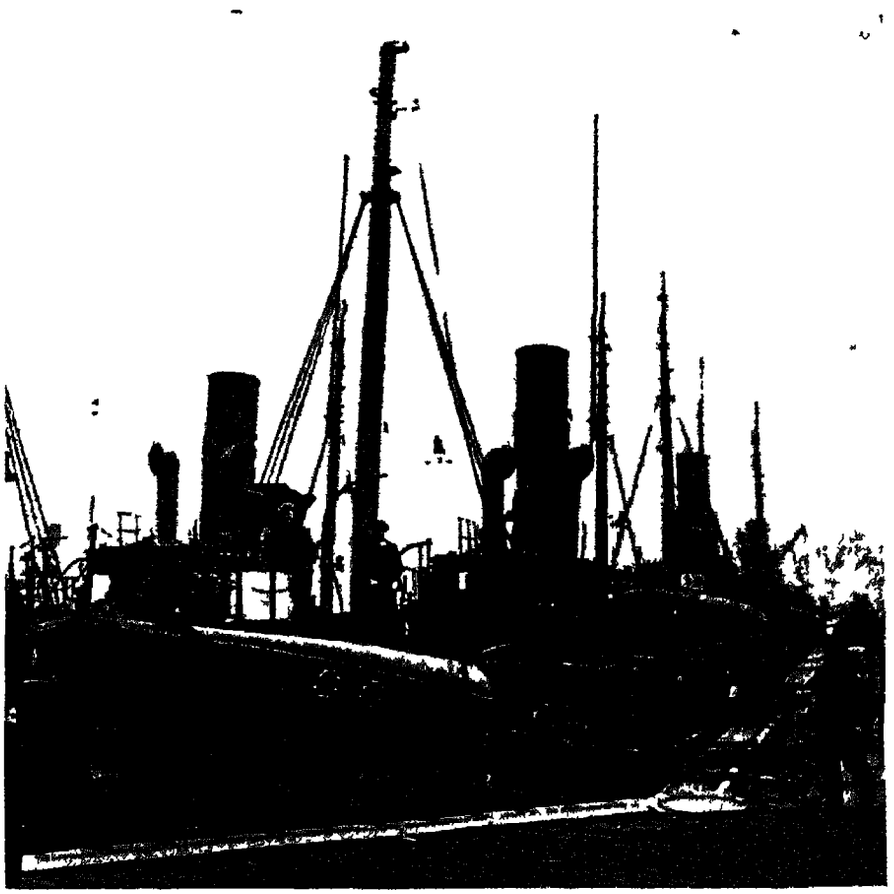
Meanwhile the work of arming merchant vessels with guns to defend themselves against submarines was going on apace. As stated earlier, many vessels already had their gun mountings in place and all that was required was for the guns to be hoisted on board and fitted in the stern. Many, too, had had their decks strengthened to take the stresses set up by a gun in action, and other vessels were similarly dealt with. According to the principles of international law, all merchant vessels have the right to arm themselves for purely defensive purposes, without thereby becoming warships; for this reason they are allowed to have guns only of a certain calibre, and they must be fitted only in the stern, as a guarantee that they cannot be used for offensive purposes.

When a merchant ship is fitted with guns forward and amidships, she loses her status as a merchant vessel and becomes recognized as a warship, thus running the risk of being sunk at sight by an enemy warship. As in the last war, many of the larger merchant ships (notably passenger liners) have been fitted with guns of as much as 6-in. calibre, for use as auxiliary cruisers. As adjuncts of the Royal Navy, and flying the White Ensign, they patrol the seas, ready to meet attack from all except heavy warships and able to capture enemy vessels.

**Liners into Cruisers**

In many a British shipyard soon after the outbreak of war could be seen passenger liners being converted into auxiliary naval cruisers. Lavishly decorated dining saloons, resplendent with artificial lighting, decorated mirrors and expensive fittings, were converted into wardrooms and gunrooms; tourist sleeping quarters and public rooms were turned into accommodation for petty officers and naval ratings, and the cargo holds into ammunition magazines. Range-finders and fire-control apparatus were set up in the navigating quarters. To lessen the danger of sinking, thousands of airtight drums are packed up to the bulkhead decks.

The fitting out of auxiliary cruisers, the conversion of fishing vessels into minesweepers and naval auxiliaries, the arming of merchant ships—all this was but a part of the magnificent effort of British shipbuilders and repairers throughout the country. Not until months or even years had passed would the full extent of this work be known fully to the public. Notable tribute must be paid in this respect to the Trade Unions, which co-operated fully and admirably with the employers and



**PERILOUS DUTY OF VOLUNTEER FISHERMEN**

**A large number of boats, mostly fishing trawlers, were pressed into service for minesweeping, one of the most dangerous of wartime duties, and manned by willing volunteers. These trawlers are being converted to their new use. It is humble vessels such as these that keep Britain's coastal waters free from danger for the comings and goings of merchant shipping.**

***British Official Photograph: Crown copyright***

the Government departments under whose control all the shipyards and repairing yards came soon after the outbreak of war. On them fell the burden of building the ships of the Royal Navy, which since the beginning of 1939 were launched at the rate of at least one warship a week.

In addition was the great merchant shipbuilding programme of 200 cargo vessels, close on 1,000,000 tons, already in course of construction before war broke out. After the outbreak the Government again took control of the ordering and construction of merchant ships and ordered on its own account tonnage to act as replacements. So rapid was the progress in the first two months of the war under the direction of Sir Amos Ayre, formerly the chairman of the Shipbuilding Conference and later appointed Director of Shipbuilding and Repairs for the Ministry of Shipping, that more than 100,000 tons of new merchant shipping was launched.

The Government's organization and control of the maritime industries at the outbreak of war was a model for all time. Plans had been carefully prepared beforehand for the establishment of a Ministry of Shipping, but politicians and public alike were not a little alarmed that this Ministry had not been set up when the war had already been in progress for a month. As it turned out, the Government could not have made a greater mistake than to have yielded to popular demand and transferred all the Government control of these industries into the hands of a brand-new Ministry. Chaos was the best that could have followed. Instead, the work was carried on by the various departments of the Board of Trade and the Admiralty and by the commercial concerns which normally function in peacetime. Gradually the organization was made ready for the transference to a single authority with a responsible Minister in the House of Commons, and when all was ready the announcement of Sir John Gilmour's appointment was made. The first thing he did as Minister of Shipping was to set up an Advisory Council composed of leading shipowners and representatives of the Trade Unions and

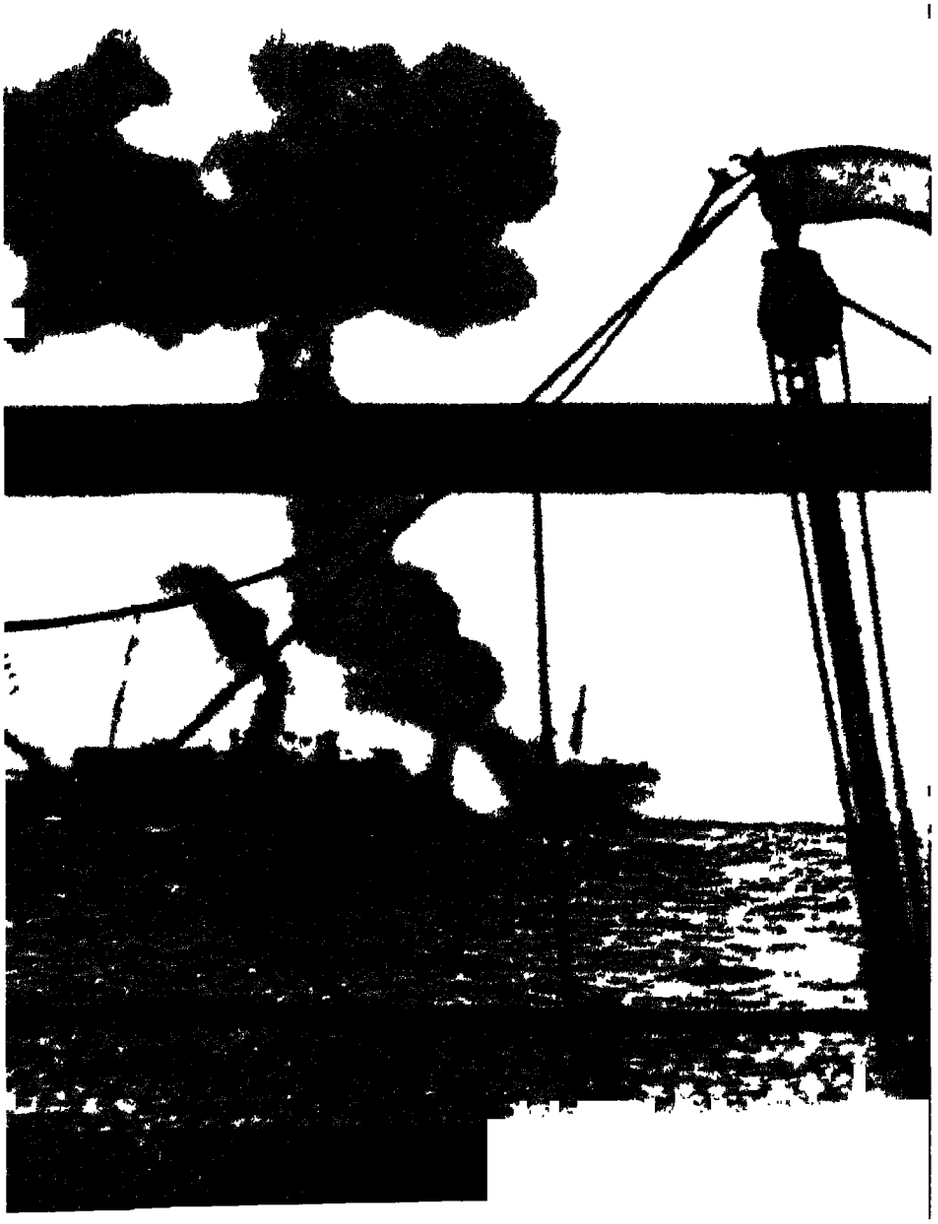
and officers of the Merchant Service Parallel with all this vital activity at home, British merchant ships all over the seven seas were plying along the trade routes on their due stations under the Royal Navy's watch and ward under the control of the vast organizations all over the Empire their destinations, routes and cargoes all duly planned But at any moment the look out man, the constant watch-keeper might give the warning 'Submarine in sight" What happened next depended on the fortune of war When the ship was alone the submarine might fire a torpedo without warning, or, as sometimes happened, the submarine would break surface and fire a warning shot to bring the vessel to a stop The captain had the choice of taking to the boats and abandoning his ship or of making an attempt to escape If his ship was slow and unarmed he would be foolhardy to do so, but if he had a useful gun mounted in the stern and a sufficient margin of speed, he would order full speed ahead and zigzag away as fast as he could, firing meanwhile at the U boat

For some years gunnery training courses for Merchant Navy officers and men have been held to train the personnel to make the best defence against submarine attack The courses last for a fortnight, and over 200 men attend

## ONE OF MANY LINERS SUNK WITHOUT WARNING

**The photograph below was taken from another ship as the Bibby liner 'Yorkshire' was torpedoed and sunk without warning Shortly afterwards the U-boat responsible sank the Ellerman liner "City of Mandalay Many women and children were among the victims**

*Photo Planet News*



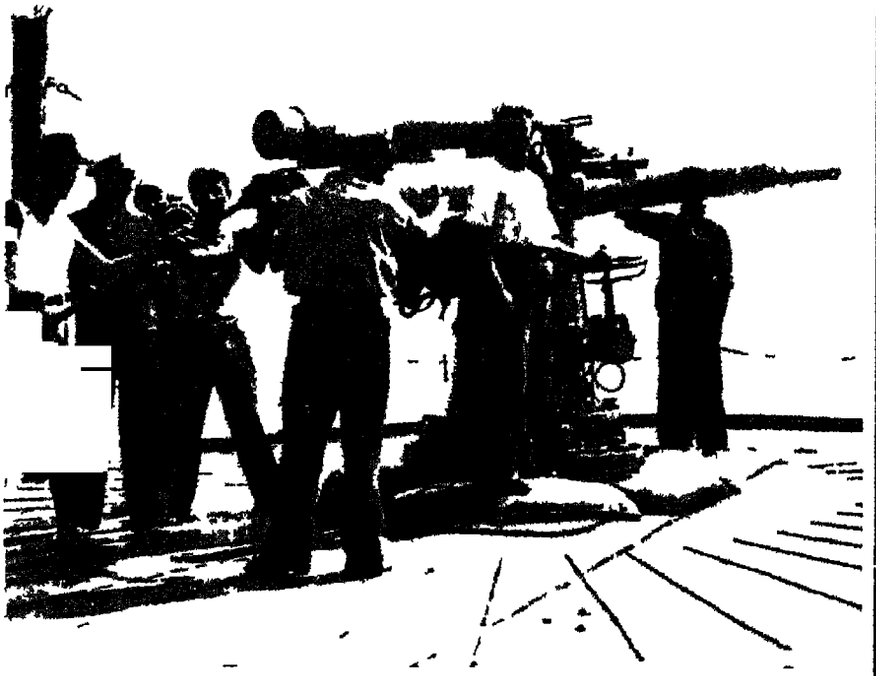
them each week The wisdom and foresight of this plan were proved within a few weeks of the outbreak of war One merchant ship in the Atlantic, attacked by a submarine, brought such accurate fire to bear on the U-boat that the submarine was holed and unable to submerge Before long two British destroyers arrived upon the scene, took off the crew and sank the submarine

Keeping station in a convoy, too, is an exceedingly difficult job When twenty or so merchant ships are steaming in convoy, they move in parallel columns, each ship keeping as close as possible to the one in front To frustrate attacking submarines the entire convoy alters course at intervals, on a signal from the Convoy Commodore It is essential that the greatest skill should be exercised in this manoeuvre, to avoid the danger of collision or the disorganization of the convoy

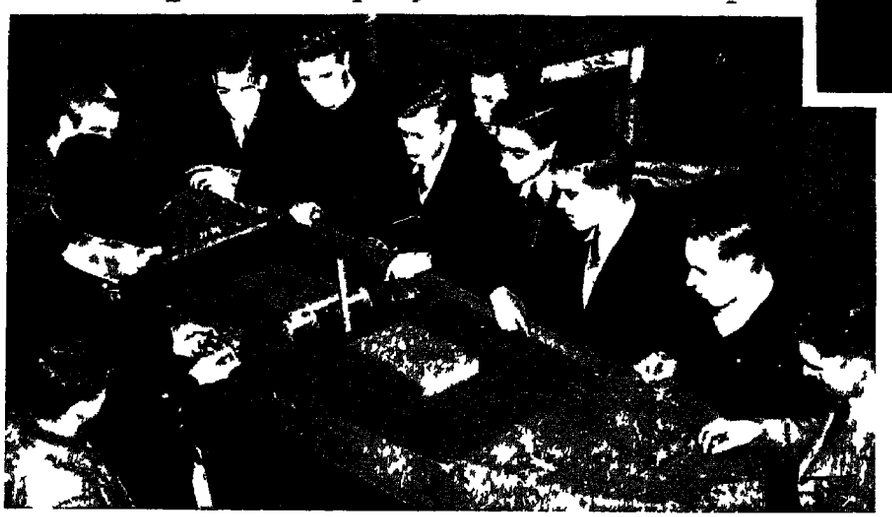
**Skilled Seamanship**

Despite the ruthlessness of the German submarine campaign, there have been many instances of U-boat commanders respecting the traditions of the sea Thus the commander of the submarine that sank the British freighter "Olivegrove" gave the British captain full instructions as to how he could sail his boats to the nearest land In other cases, the crew were given supplies from the U-boat and wished good luck When the trawler "Alvis" was stopped by a submarine, its commander decided he would not sink her when he realized that he could not guarantee the safety of her crew Instead, he dismantled her wireless, smashed the dynamo in the engine-room and wrecked the fishing gear, he gave them cigarettes and a bottle of gin in exchange for a lifebuoy which he wanted as a souvenir, shook hands with the captain and departed The U-boat commander who sank the "Firby" gave the world a surprise when he wirelessed to the First Lord of the Admiralty the position of the ship's boats

In the third week of the war history was made when the crew of a torpedoed ship was rescued by two seaplanes of the Royal Air Force As related in more detail in Chapter 10, the "Kensington Court" was attacked off the west coast of Britain and the crew of 34 were forced to take to their boats, having previously sent out S O S messages giving their position These men were picked up by two R A F seaplanes on patrol duty, which proceeded immediately to the position indicated There they found the vessel sinking and the men in the boats The seaplanes alighted and sent out collapsible rubber dinghies in which to ferry the men across





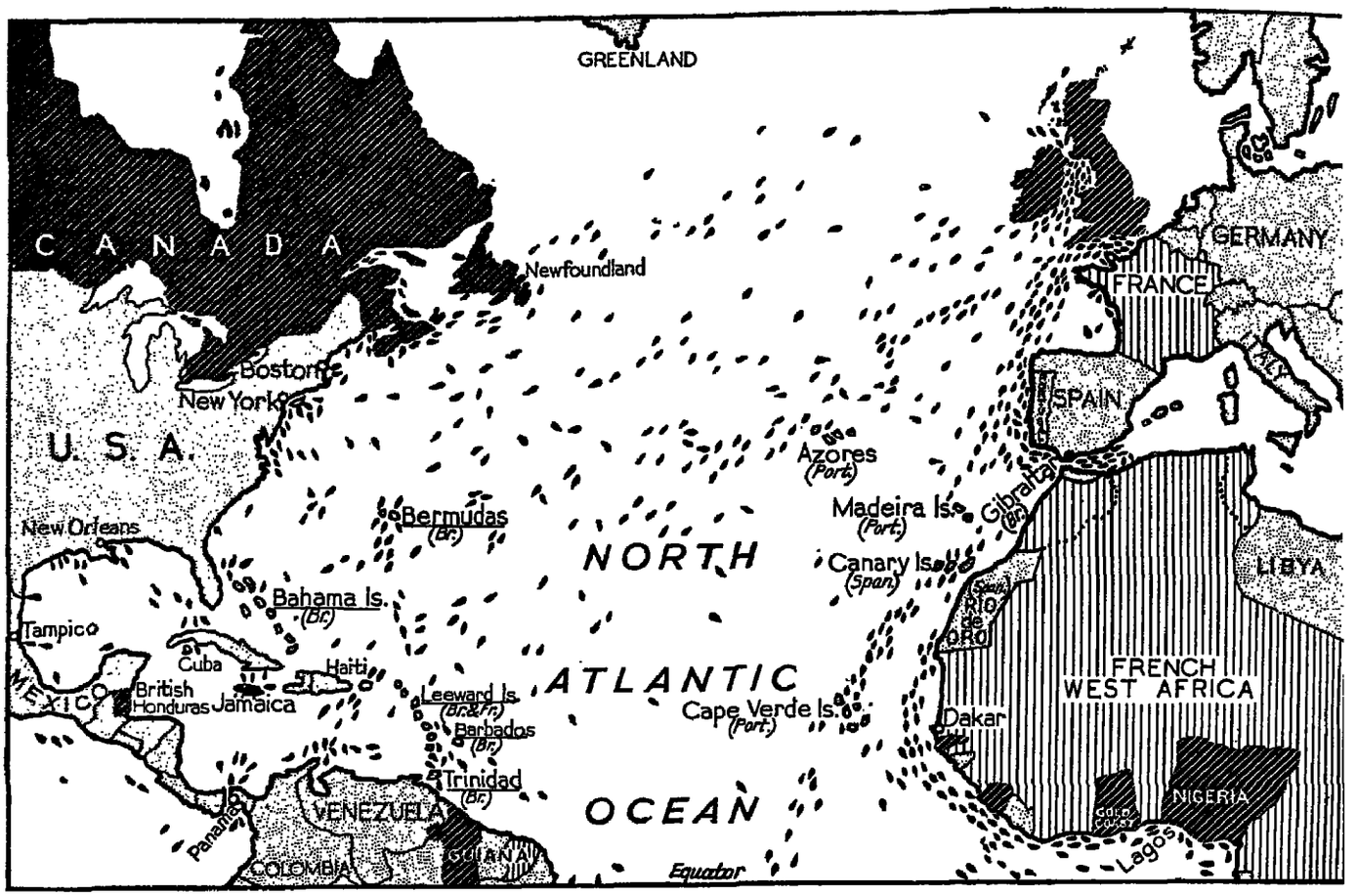


## HOW MERCHANT SHIPS WERE ARMED AGAINST U-BOATS

The photograph above shows the seaman gun-layer of a cargo vessel He has familiarized himself with his duties by frequent drill such as that seen in progress at top left, aboard another merchant ship As these pictures convey, the work was taken up with great enthusiasm by merchant seamen and their officers The photograph below shows the after gun and some of the smoke floats on a British liner seen against the New York skyline At the left, with the aid of a model, merchant sailors are being instructed in defence against the deadly mine

*Photos, A L Kemball Topical Keystone Associated Press*






**BRITAIN'S UBIQUITOUS MERCHANT NAVY**

Some idea of the magnitude and extent of British merchant shipping is conveyed by this map of the busy North Atlantic region, on which are indicated the number and approximate location of British ships on an average day before the outbreak of war. On any given day there are about 2,000 British vessels at sea, and between 100 and 150 enter or leave home ports.

*Courtesy of "News Chronicle"*

The end of the month saw a new phase in the war at sea when the British cargo liner "Clement" was sunk in the South Atlantic by the "pocket" battleship "Admiral Scheer." Her sister ship, the "Deutschland," also indicated her presence in the Atlantic during October by the sinking of the British freighter "Stonegate" and a Norwegian vessel. But up to the end of the month there was no further news of these marauders. In the middle of October, however, the submarines scored more heavy successes after a certain period of inactivity. Possibly a new flotilla had been sent out from Germany to reinforce the survivors of the first batch. In one night one British liner (the "Lochavon") and two French vessels (the "Bretagne" and "Louisiane") were lost in the Atlantic. The French liners suffered one or two losses among passengers and crew, but the British vessel escaped fatalities. Then, in the following week, two British liners, the "Yorkshire" and the "City of Mandalay," were sunk by the same submarine, with tragic loss of life.

Despite these serious individual losses, the total for October, as we saw above, was little more than half that of the first month of war according to the figures available. The total French losses in the whole two months amounted only to eight vessels, of 47,933 tons gross. The success of the anti-submarine campaign of the Royal Navy and the R.A.F., and particularly the effectiveness of the convoy system, are shown in a striking manner by the figures for the losses of neutral flags by German action—16 ships, of 34,678 tons, in September and 16, of 44,922 tons, in October.

In addition, to offset these tonnage losses, numbers of German vessels were captured by the Allied Navies and more than 100,000 tons of new ships had been launched; while almost the entire merchant navy of Poland, amounting to 63 ships, of 121,630 tons, escaped from enemy hands, including four fine modern motor liners. Moreover, as a set-off to the loss of cargoes sunk with ships, nearly 500,000 tons of contraband were intercepted by the Allied Navies in the first two months of war. The British Naval Contraband Control Service was responsible for the detention of four-fifths of this amount. (For a fuller account of this aspect of the war *see* Chapter 30.)

By the beginning of the third month the German merchant navy had been virtually driven from the seas and the menace of the submarine had been at least temporarily allayed. The much-discussed peril of attack from the air had been proved a bogey, for several attacks on merchant convoys in the North Sea by enemy bombers failed to score a single hit, although many aircraft were brought down. The Merchant Service carried on, increasing in strength rather than weakening, bringing cargoes of foodstuffs and essential raw materials from all parts of the Empire and the world. At one British port alone four convoys docked within four days and unloaded over 100,000 tons of food, in spite of the blockade of Britain which the German Navy claimed to be imposing. The rationing of food, which it was originally thought would have to be started in November, was indefinitely postponed. There could be no greater proof of the efficiency of the men and officers of the Merchant Navy, not less than of all members of the maritime industries.





## NAZIS' FIRST ACT OF RUTHLESSNESS

**The first act of German ruthlessness upon the high seas was the torpedoing of the "Athenia" on the very day on which war was declared, as related in Chapter 10. The photograph above taken from a ship nearby shows the ill-fated ship shortly before she sank, her stern already awash. On the right she is seen with her bows high out of the water, just before her final plunge.**

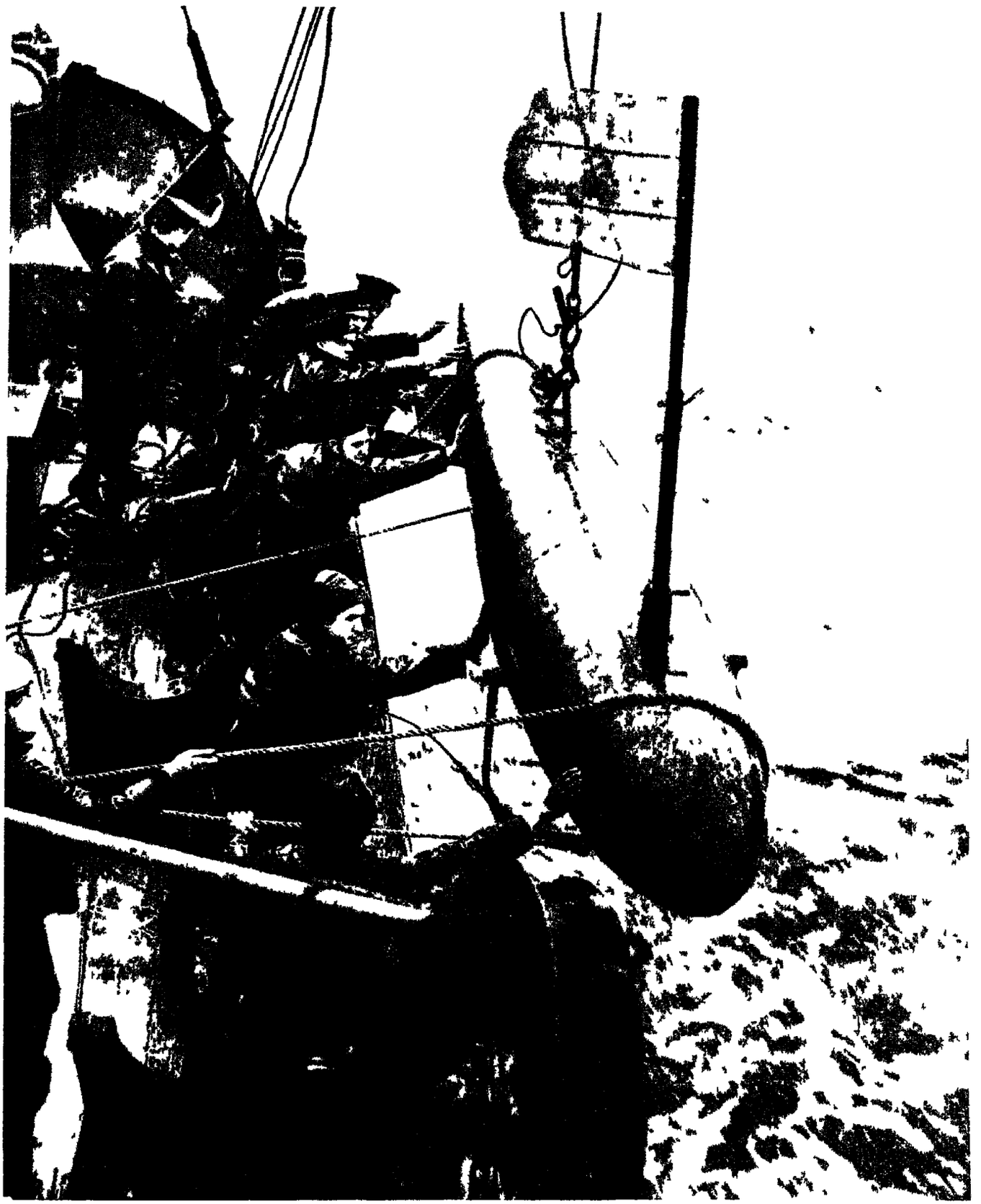
*Photos, G. E. Withams*



KEEPING THE SEAS FOR BRITAIN'S TRADE

Despite U-boat activities and the reckless sowing of German mines, the Nazis found themselves unable to stop the steady flow of trade to and from British ports Thanks to the convoy system instituted early in the war, merchant ships could sail round Britain's coasts safely under the vigilant guard of the British Navy Here ships of a British convoy stretching as far as the eye can see are being escorted on their way

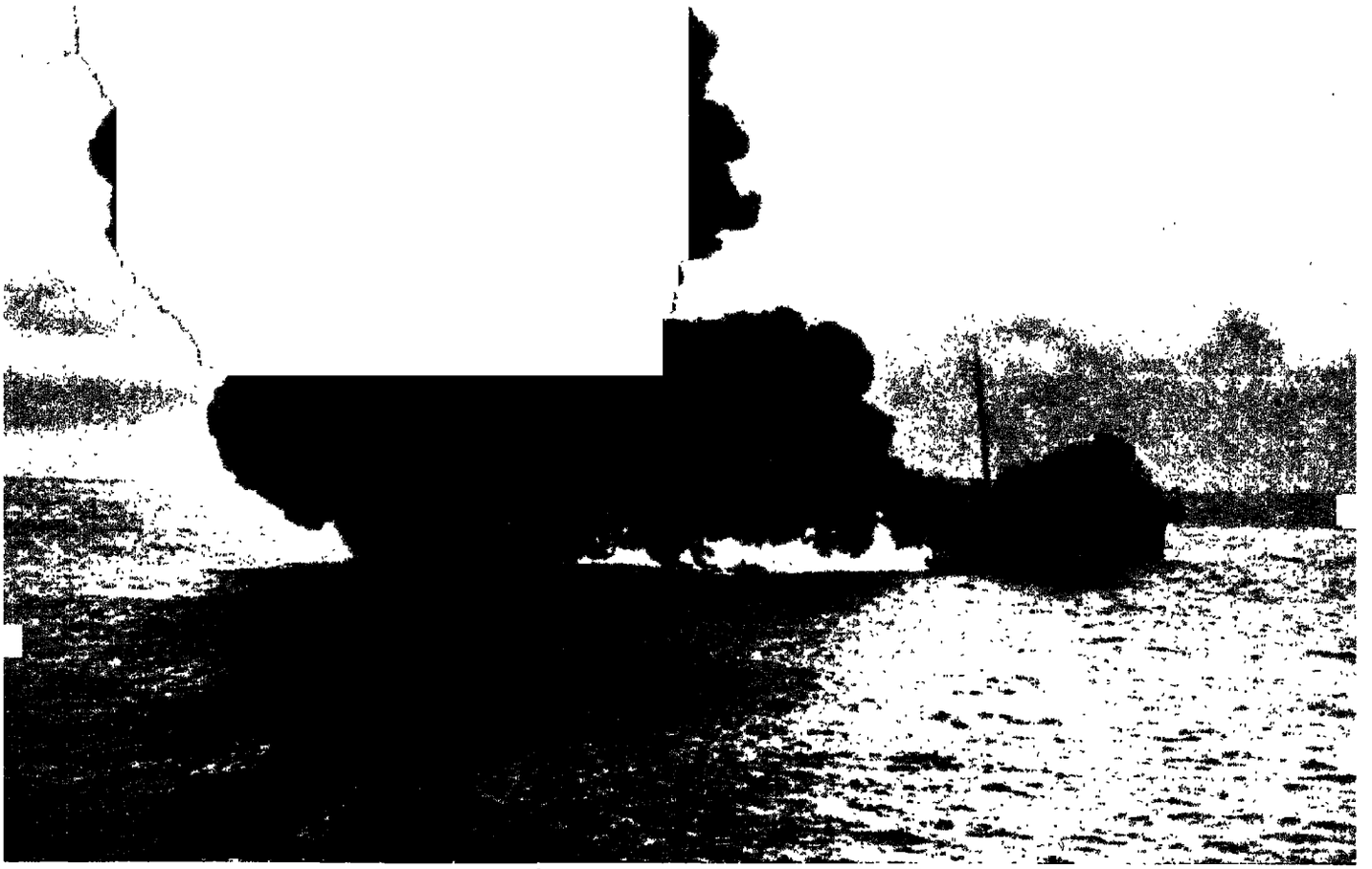
*British Official Photograph Crown copyright*



## ONE OF THE WAR'S MOST DANGEROUS JOBS

One of the war's most hazardous jobs is that of minesweeping, a task carried out daily by the fleet of minesweepers which constantly combs the seas round Britain's coast to protect her shipping and that of neutrals bound for her harbours. Here some of the crew of a British minesweeper are seen dropping overboard an Oropesa float, a buoy which is used for supporting the drag wires of the sweeping gear.

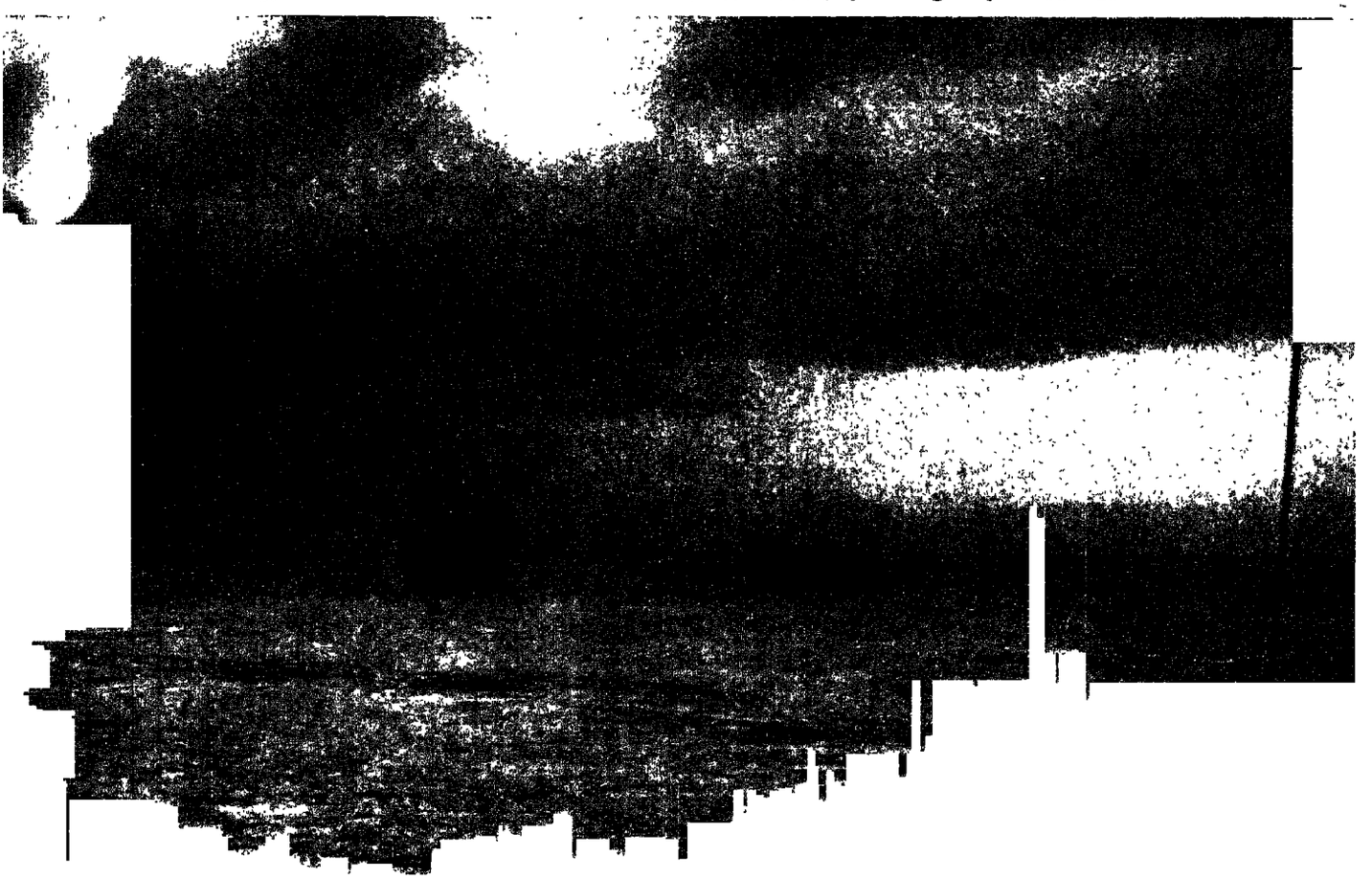
*Photo, Planet News*



## LAST MOMENTS OF A TORPEDOED TANKER

*Photos, Planet*

These photographs were taken as the French tanker "Emile Miguet" went down after being torpedoed by a U-boat. In the upper picture a great pall of black smoke is seen rising from the blazing wreck, while burning oil covers the surface of the sea near by. The explosion broke the ship's back, and the lower photograph shows the two halves settling down in the water; 39 of the crew were saved and landed at Boston, Massachusetts, by the cargo ship "Black Hawk."



# *Historic Documents. LVII–LIX*

## *BELGIAN-DUTCH PEACE APPEAL AND ALLIED REPLIES*

Beset both by military menace and by diplomatic pressure, the Sovereigns of Holland and Belgium held a sudden conference in the Palace at The Hague during the night of November 6, 1939, the outcome of which was the issue on November 7 of an offer to the belligerent nations of their services as mediators. The text of this appeal is given below, followed by the replies of King George and of President Lebrun.

QUEEN WILHELMINA AND KING LEOPOLD IN A JOINT APPEAL FOR PEACE, ISSUED IN A COMMUNIQUÉ BY THE DUTCH FOREIGN OFFICE, NOVEMBER 7, 1939:

At this hour of anxiety for the whole world, before the war breaks out in Western Europe in all its violence, we have the conviction that it is our duty once again to raise our voice.

Some time ago the belligerent parties declared that they would not be unwilling to examine a reasonable and well-founded basis for an equitable peace.

It seems to us that in the present circumstances it is difficult for them to come into contact in order to state their standpoints with greater precision and to bring them nearer to one another.

As Sovereigns of two neutral States, having good relations with all their neighbours, we are ready to offer them our good offices.

If this were agreeable to them, we are disposed, by every means at our disposal that they might care to suggest to us, and in a spirit of friendly understanding, to facilitate the ascertaining of the elements of an agreement to be arrived at.

This, it seems to us, is the task we have to fulfil for the good of our people and in the interests of the whole world.

We hope that our offer will be accepted, and that thus a first step will be taken towards the establishment of a durable peace.

REPLY OF KING GEORGE TO QUEEN WILHELMINA, NOV. 12:

I have carefully examined, with my Governments in the United Kingdom, Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa, the appeal which your Majesty and his Majesty the King of the Belgians addressed to me on November 7.

I recall the appeal made by his Majesty the King of the Belgians on August 23 in the name of the Heads of State of the Oslo Group of States, in which his Majesty pleaded for the submission of disputes and claims to open negotiation carried out in the spirit of brotherly co-operation. My Government in the United Kingdom as well as the French Government sent favourable replies to this appeal.

I recall also the joint offer of good offices made by your Majesty and his Majesty the King of the Belgians to my Government in the United Kingdom and to the French, German, Italian and Polish Governments on August 28. This offer was welcomed by my Government and by the French, Italian and Polish Governments. A few days later the German Government launched an unprovoked attack on Poland, which has been overrun with every circumstance of brutality.

My Governments deeply appreciate the spirit of your Majesty's offer, and they would always be willing to examine a reasonable and assured basis for an equitable peace. It is, as it has always been, my desire that the war should not last one day longer than is absolutely necessary, and I can therefore at once reply to that part of your Majesty's appeal in which you state your willingness to facilitate the ascertaining of the elements of an agreement to be reached.

The essential conditions upon which we are determined that an honourable peace must be secured have already been plainly stated. The documents which have been published since the beginning of the war clearly explain its origin and establish the responsibility for its outbreak. My peoples took up arms only after every effort had been made to save peace.

The immediate occasion leading to our decision to enter the war was Germany's aggression against Poland. But this aggression was only a fresh instance of German policy towards her neighbours.

The larger purposes for which my peoples are now fighting are to secure that Europe may be redeemed, in the words of my Prime Minister in the United Kingdom, "from perpetually recurring fear of German aggression so as to enable the peoples of Europe to preserve their independence and their liberties," and to prevent for the future resort to force instead of to pacific means in settlement of international disputes.

These aims have been amplified and enlarged on a number of occasions, in particular in the statements made by my Prime Minister in the United Kingdom in the House of Commons on October 12 and my Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the House of Lords on November 2.

The elements which in the opinion of my Governments must form part of any settlement emerge clearly and distinctly from these declarations of policy. Should your Majesty be able to communicate to me any proposals from Germany of such a character as to afford real prospect of achieving the purpose I have described above, I can say at once that my Governments would give them their most earnest consideration.

[A reply in similar terms was addressed to King Leopold.]

REPLY OF PRESIDENT LEBRUN TO QUEEN WILHELMINA AND KING LEOPOLD, NOVEMBER 12:

The Government and people of the French Republic are unanimous in paying homage to the sentiments which inspire the message which your Majesties have addressed to me. They fully appreciate its lofty and noble character.

No nation is more peace-loving than the French nation. No nation has made greater sacrifices in the cause of European peace. France has already and on frequent occasions made known, and she does so once more today, that she has been and remains determined to welcome every possibility of assuring a just and durable peace for all peoples.

Only a peace founded on justice really endures. France has taken up arms to put a definite end to the methods of violence and force which, for the past two years, in defiance of the most solemn engagements and in violation of the pledged word, have already enslaved or destroyed three nations in Europe and today menace the security of all nations. A durable peace, therefore, can only be established by repairing the injustices which force has imposed on Austria, on Czecho-Slovakia, and on Poland.

Moreover, it can only be established to the extent in which effective guarantees of a political and economic nature assure in the future respect for the liberty of all nations. Mankind will only be delivered from uncertainty and anguish if they are sure that new attacks against justice will henceforward be outlawed.

Any solution which legalized the triumph of injustice would only secure for Europe a precarious truce bearing no relation to the just and stable peace to which your Majesties look forward.

Today it is the duty of Germany rather than of France to declare herself for or against this kind of peace for which every country, menaced as it is in its security and independence, is waiting.

[EDITOR'S NOTE.

On November 15 Herr von Ribbentrop, German Foreign Minister, summoned the Belgian Ambassador in Berlin and the Dutch Minister and informed them verbally that, after the "blunt rejection" of the peace move by Britain and France, the German Government considered the matter closed.

Written replies may have been sent by the German Government to Queen Wilhelmina and King Leopold, but, if so, the fact was not made public.

On November 16 the "Deutsche Diplomatische-politische Korrespondenz," the organ of the German Foreign Office described as "incredible provocation" the British and French replies to the offer of good offices made by the Dutch Belgian Sovereigns.]

Chapter 27

# THE NEUTRAL COUNTRIES: GROWING MENACE OF NAZI-SOVIET AGGRESSION

*Exodus of Germans from Baltic States—Stalin's Demands on Finland—Conference of Scandinavian Rulers—Futile Russo-Finnish Negotiations—The Nazi Threat to Holland—Peace Appeal by Dutch and Belgian Rulers—Turkey's Pact with Britain and France*

FOUR outstanding events brought the neutral States prominently to the fore in the second phase of the war, covering the period October 1 to November 14. Three of these events—German threats to Holland, the Anglo-Turkish Pact, and Russian demands on Finland—had been more or less anticipated; but the fourth event, the exodus of Baltic Germans from the Baltic States, took the world completely by surprise. The exodus was so much at variance with Hitler's oft-proclaimed demand for "Lebensraum" for his people that it could only be surmised that Russia had offered Germany substantial advantages elsewhere for this sacrifice of her influence in the Baltic.

Inspired German statements hinted that the move was a preliminary to the gathering within the frontiers of Greater Germany of all Germans living abroad; but the haste (savouring almost of flight) with which the migration was executed could not silence suspicions that it had been imposed on Hitler by Stalin as a condition for Russian friendship. This view found support in the fact that the exodus of the Balts coincided with the entry of the Red Army into the Baltic States. The first intimation of the intended migration was given to the Latvian and Estonian Governments on October 14, 1939. Six days afterwards ten German merchant ships steamed into Riga harbour to take home the first batch of Latvian Balts. German schools and hospitals were abruptly closed, and German newspapers ceased publication. From Estonia 11,500 Balts left in thirteen ships, leaving a mere 1,500 behind. The liquidation of their still extensive property created an economic problem of the first magnitude for the Baltic States concerned. There were 50,000 Balts living in Latvian towns, and 20,000 in the countryside. Latvia, as a result, had 60,000 hectares (233 sq. miles) of land left on her hands for which new cultivators had to be found.

On the whole, however, both Estonia and Latvia welcomed the departure of the Germans. They had been an uncomfortable minority.

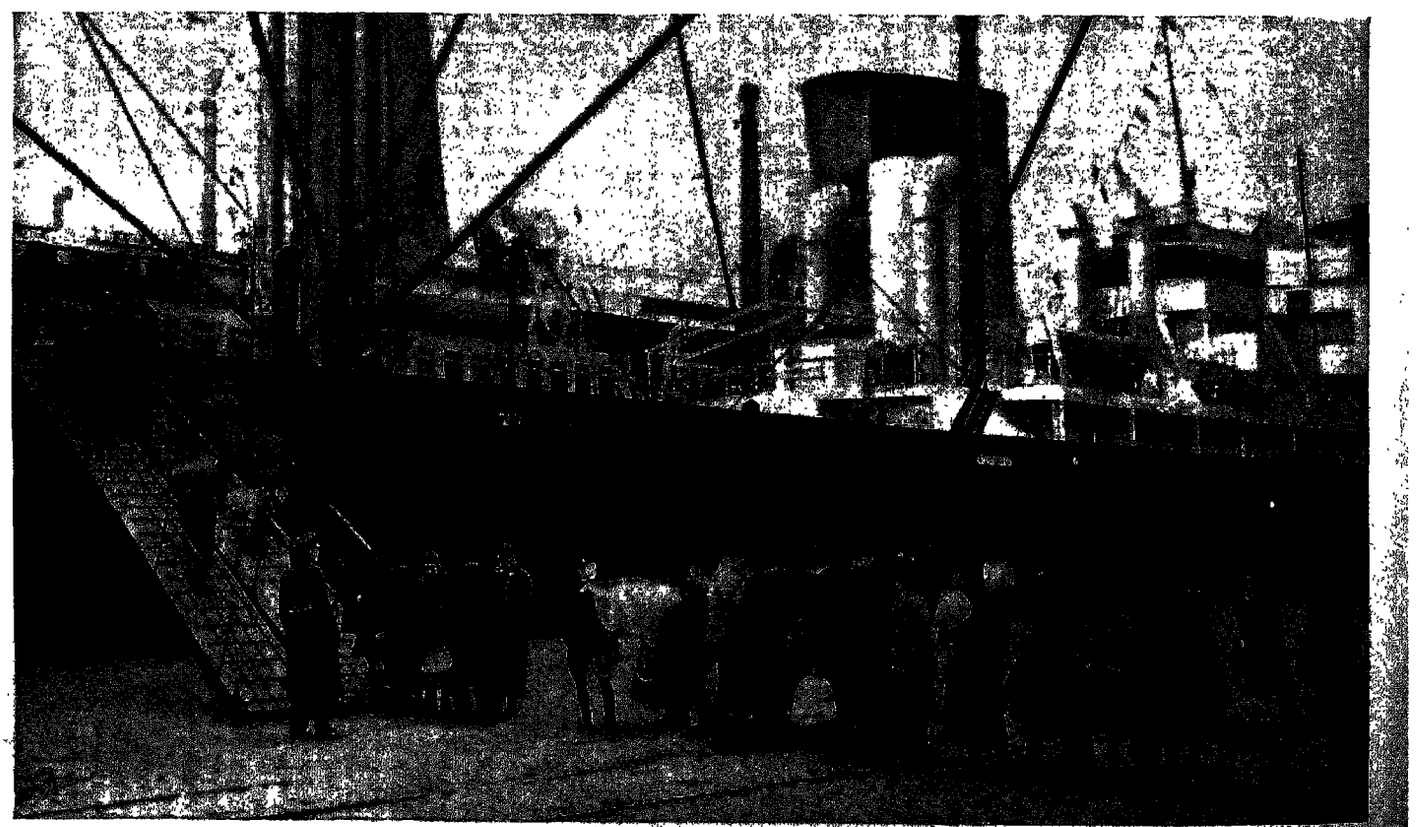
**Exit the Baltic German**

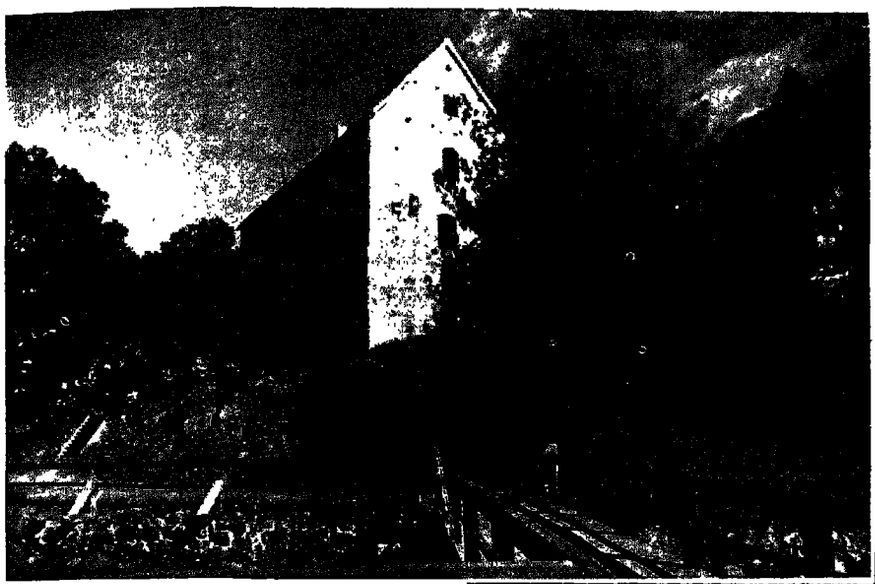
Descendants of the Crusading Knights of the Sword, who in the early Middle Ages laid waste the land along the shores of the Baltic and brought the interests of the Hansa merchants to bear under the triple forces of culture, Cross, and commerce, they were never assimilated with the Lettish and Estonian inhabitants.

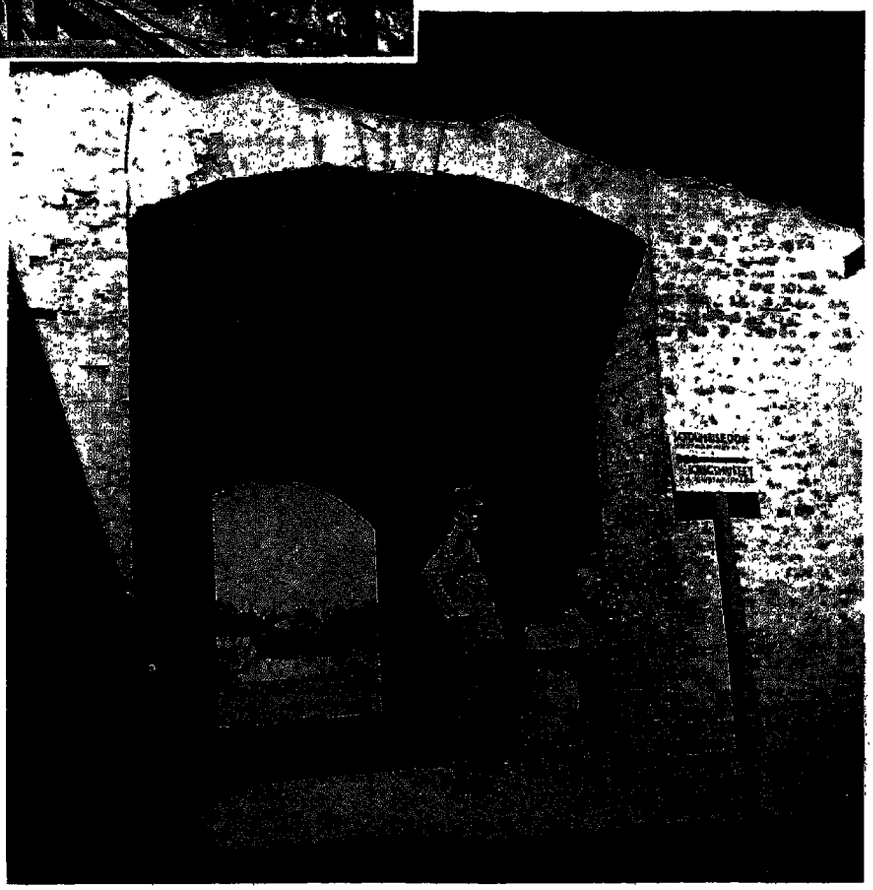
**LATVIAN GERMANS RETURN TO THE REICH**

**The repatriation of Germans from the Baltic States was a move so at variance with Hitler's repeated demands for more "Lebensraum" that many surmised that it had been insisted on by Russia as a condition of the German-Soviet pact. German nationals in Latvia are here seen leaving Riga on the steamer "Steuben"**

*Photo. Sport & General*







**IN THE FINNISH ISLES THAT DOMINATE THE BALTIC**

**The Aaland Islands, at the entrance to the Gulf of Bothnia, are of great strategic importance, and Russia has long coveted them. Top, Kastelholme, a medieval stronghold of the Aaland Islands, re-fortified by Finland; above, a scene on the island of Sveaborg (Suomenlinna), the "Gibraltar of the North," three miles off Helsinki, of whose harbour it forms the defence.**

***Photos, New Age Pictures; Denise Bellon***

As rich landowners and merchants under the Tsar, they had formed a predominantly aristocratic community, supporting the oppressions of the Tsarist regime in return for the safeguarding of their privileged position. Although dispossessed when Estonia and Latvia regained their independence after the war of 1914–18, many of them had looked forward to a reassertion of German domination in the Baltic States. It was not surprising, therefore, that M. J. Uluots, Prime Minister of Estonia, stated that with the emigration of the German minority there had disappeared from Estonian-German cultural relations "this frequently disturbing link."

After the departure of the Baltic Germans Stalin's last anxiety regarding his complete domination of the Baltic States was removed, and the Soviet Press now began to turn its attention to Finland, with inspired hints regarding the desirability of Russia repossessing her former island strongholds in the Gulf of Finland—notably Sveaborg, "key to Helsingfors (Helsinki)," and the Aaland Islands. Sveaborg had been heavily fortified by the Russians before the war of 1914–18, and was the centre of a ring of fortifications known as the Suomenlinna or "Fort of Finland," protecting the Finnish capital. On this occasion, however, the Soviet Press was somewhat in advance of official Soviet circles, and neither Sveaborg nor the Aaland Islands figured in the Russian demands made later on. The Finnish Cabinet had already announced on October 8, 1939, that it had decided to accept an invitation from Moscow to send a special delegation to "discuss questions of a political and economic nature."

**Russia Turns on Finland**

Confident of her greater powers of resistance, and mindful of the moral support she enjoyed in the United States and Sweden, Norway and Denmark, Finland did not imitate the example of the Baltic States by sending a submissive Foreign Minister to Moscow. Instead, she sent M. Paasikivi, Finnish Ambassador in Stockholm, and his first talk with M. Molotov, the Soviet Foreign Commissar, was preceded by messages from President Roosevelt and from the Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish Governments to President Kalinin of Russia, expressing their hopes for a fair deal for Finland. Nevertheless, with the fate of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania before their eyes, following similar invitations from Moscow, statesmen in Finland and in the Scandinavian States were filled with foreboding. The protracted negotiations did nothing to calm these fears, although Russian desires were not definitely known, the utmost secrecy being maintained on both sides. They were, however, sufficiently serious to warrant a meeting of Finland's "Inner Cabinet" on M. Paasikivi's return, and the talks in Moscow were not resumed until October 21, when M. Paasikivi was accompanied by Finland's Finance Minister, M. Tanner, who in pre-war days, it is reported, once saved Stalin from arrest by sheltering him in his house.

In the meantime, President K[illegible] Finland and M. Erkko, [illegible]

Foreign Minister, had attended a meeting in Stockholm of the heads of the Scandinavian States. While awaiting the final outcome of the talks, Finland took no chances. Helsinki, the capital, was partly evacuated and was blacked out. The entire Finnish merchant marine was ordered to take refuge away from ports, in the Gulf of Finland, and the Finnish Army (under the command of Lieut.-Gen. Ostermann) was brought up to a strength of 300,000. But still there was no hint to the outside world of the true nature of the Russian demands. That they were rather drastic was surmised from a speech made on October 27 by M. Erkko, who said that Finland was not prepared to sacrifice anything essential for her freedom and independent existence, and no self-respecting nation could accept the proposals as rumour had shaped them.

Unwelcome but not unexpected enlightenment came five days later in a speech by M. Molotov to the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union, which broke the hitherto self-imposed silence of the two negotiating parties in an unpleasant manner. After fiercely attacking the Democracies, M. Molotov said:

"It is untrue that the Soviet Government is demanding the Aaland and other islands from Finland. What Russia wants is a mutual assistance pact along the lines of those negotiated with the other Baltic States. The Soviet Government has asked Finland to move back some kilometres from the frontier in the Leningrad area and take part of Karelia in exchange. The Soviet Government also sought to rent some islands and create naval bases in the northern part of the Gulf of Finland."

M. Molotov added: "If the Finns continue in their failure to meet Soviet requirements, it will be harmful to the cause of peace and to the Finns themselves."

The Finnish Government professed not to be astonished by Russia's demands, but the broadcast by Molotov brought new and dangerous factors into the situation—namely, Soviet prestige, and public opinion in Finland, which became, for the first time, aware of the far-sweeping Soviet proposals. A certain section of the Finnish Army was inclined to regard the speech as a challenge to Finland's honour, and signs of a split became apparent between those who favoured President Kallio's negotiations with Russia and those who were for breaking off negotiations. Speaking the day after M. Molotov, M. Erkko emphasized that Finland would maintain her neutrality at all costs, and there could therefore be no question of a Power hostile to Russia using Finnish territory as a base for operations. Russian hopes for a naval base at Hanko (Hangö) on the Finnish coast were held to be unacceptable; and while Finland might have been ready to consider the Russian proposals for an exchange of territory and the grant of certain islands in the Gulf of Finland, a mutual assistance pact with Russia was definitely out of the question, as it compromised Finland's neutrality.

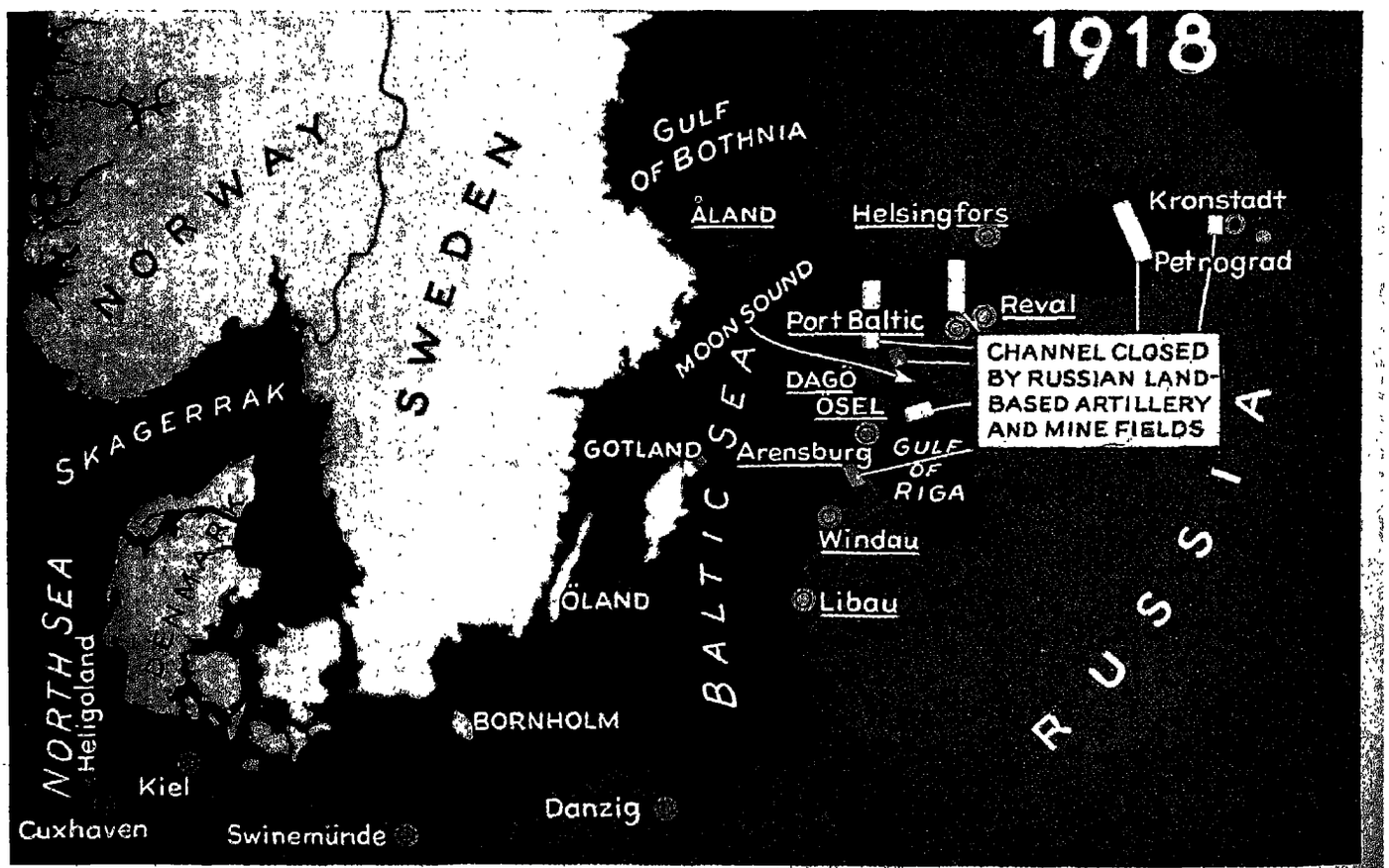
**Finland States Her Case**

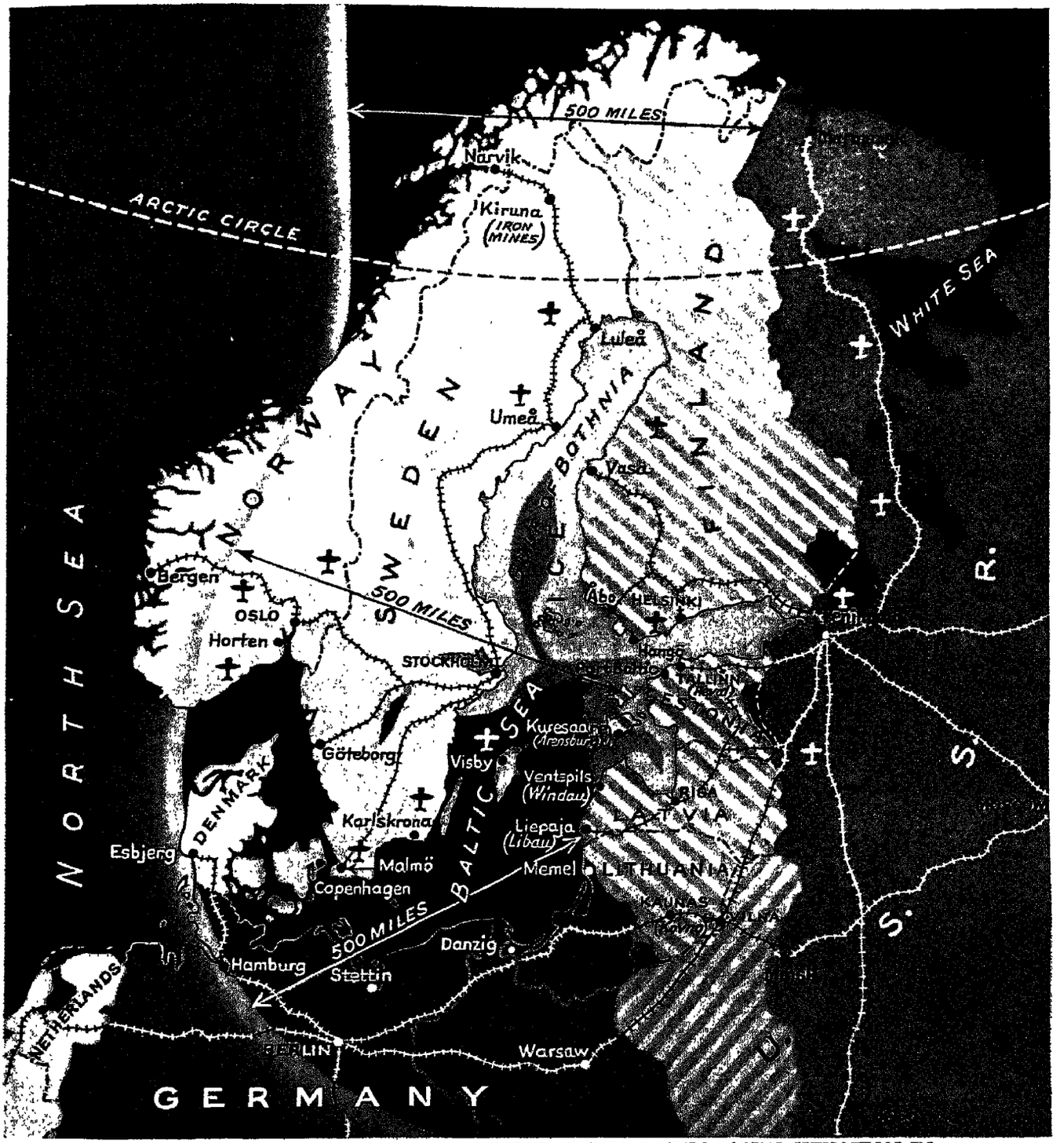
Finland endeavoured to continue the negotiations for a few days, but the atmosphere rapidly deteriorated, culminating in their abandonment and in bitter attacks by the Russian Press on leading personalities of the Finnish Government.

"The present Finnish leaders have begun the dangerous game of hate propaganda," said "Trud," the Russian organ of the heavy industries. "This little State of 3,650,000 people wants to triumph over the Soviet Union with its 183,000,000 people. It is absurd. British and French Imperialism stands behind the Finns."

### WHEN GERMANY CONTROLLED THE BALTIC IN 1918

**The map below shows the position in the Baltic in 1918, shortly before the First Great War ended. Germany then controlled most of this vital area, and Russia had closed the Gulfs of Finland and Riga at several points by minefields and shore batteries. After Russia had negotiated her separate peace with Germany, the Germans secured the naval bases underlined, leaving Russia only Kronstadt and Petrograd (now Leningrad). Circled dots mark German naval bases at the end of the war of 1914-18.**






**SALIENT FEATURES OF THE BALTIC SITUATION IN 1939**

**War strategy in the Baltic regions is governed largely by the fact that in an average winter the Gulfs of Bothnia and Finland are frozen over. The parts frozen are shown in light grey ; darker grey indicates the area of shifting ice floes. Striped from upper left to lower right is territory lost by Russia after the 1914-18 war ; striped the opposite way is her regained Polish territory. The tiny 'planes mark air bases, and the shaded white line running North and South shows the 500-mile limit of effectiveness of the Soviet Air Force. Also marked are strategic railways, among them the important line to Sweden's iron mines at Kiruna and to Narvik.**

Whatever Russia's ultimate aims were, it was obvious that in pressing Finland for a mutual assistance pact and the cession of territory she was bent on finally securing domination of the Baltic. Memories of British warships in the Baltic in the years following the war of 1914–18, which played a large role in enabling the small Baltic countries to break loose from Russian domination, were kept alive in the Russian Press throughout the negotiations. As regards Russia's alleged fears for her security, while it is true that the Finnish frontier on the Karelian Isthmus was only some 20 miles from Leningrad, Finland could not well withdraw without sacrificing her strongest line of defence on the Isthmus, the so-called "Mannerheim Line." Had Finland ceded islands in the Finnish Gulf, the strategic triangle formed by her [illegible] towns of Helsinki, Viipuri and [illegible] might have been [illegible]



**PREPARING THE ANSWER TO RUSSIA**

Finland's delegate at the Russian-Finnish talks in Moscow which preceded the Soviet act of aggression was M. Paasikivi, who is seen above (on the right) in conversation with M. Erkko, Finland's Foreign Minister.

*Photo, Press Topics*

garrison in Hanko could prevent Swedish supplies reaching Finland, and without these Finland had slight hopes of resisting an aggressor for any length of time. The surrender of the Rybachi Peninsula in the Arctic, on the other hand, would give to Russia Finland's only ice-free port and immense mineral deposits, including nickel, and make Finland totally dependent for her overseas trade on Russian goodwill in the Baltic.

Hardly less affected by Russia's demands on Finland were the Scandinavian countries, comprising Sweden, Norway and Denmark, and Iceland. There was a meeting in Stockholm of King Gustav, King Haakon, King Christian and President Kallio of Finland while the Finnish-Russian negotiations were in progress. Sweden's chief concern was that the Aaland Islands should not fall into Russian hands, as these islands, if dominated by a hostile Power, could be made a base for menacing action against Stockholm and the Swedish mainland. Norway wondered whether Russia's desires would stop at a re-conquest of her former territory, and whether Norway's own ice-free ports on the Arctic and the North Sea might not be affected. All three countries—Denmark, Sweden and Norway—feared an interruption of their extremely close commercial and cultural ties with Finland. The Stockholm conference closed on October 20, however, without any definite promise of direct support for Finland if she were attacked by Russia.

**Threat to Scandinavia**

Coinciding with Russian pressure on Finland came alarming news from the Netherlands. Holland had hitherto relied on the assumption that her value as a neutral clearing house for Germany was far greater than any value she could have to that country as a belligerent, or as a "Protectorate" on the Czecho-Slovak model. Her inviolability, she considered, was axiomatic. But in the early days of November confirmed reports of German troop concentrations along Holland's frontier and along that of her neighbour, Belgium, began to create uneasiness. This was increased by reports that German engineers were constructing pontoons along the Rhine just beyond Holland's frontiers, and by the discovery of an espionage affair, in which Dutch military uniforms were smuggled over the frontier into Germany.

The German Press began at the same time to accuse Holland of undue acquiescence towards the British authorities as regards contraband control, demanding that Holland should stage a test case by ordering her ships not to stop when summoned by British warships; further, there were frequent violations of Dutch and Belgian neutrality by German warplanes. The aim of this campaign of innuendo was apparently to prove that Holland was incapable of maintaining neutrality, and therefore to furnish Germany with an excuse for intervention. The Dutch were also fearful that the stalemate in the West might induce the Germans to attempt a flanking movement through Holland, which, if it achieved nothing else, would at least put Germany in possession of the Dutch coast and air bases for attacking Britain. Previous German air attacks on Britain had not been successful, owing to the

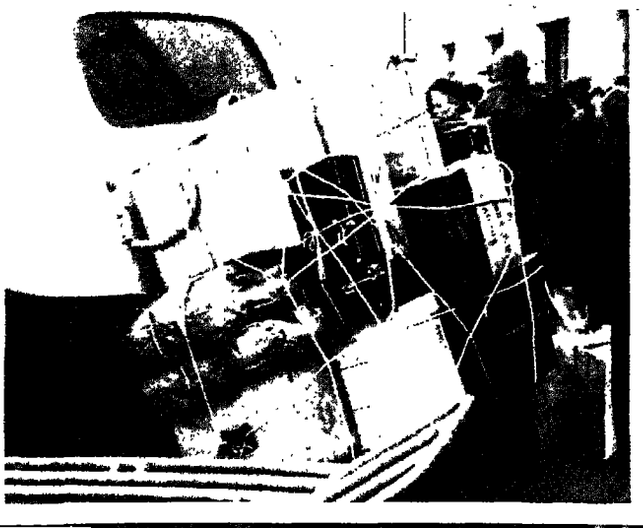
**Pressure on Holland**

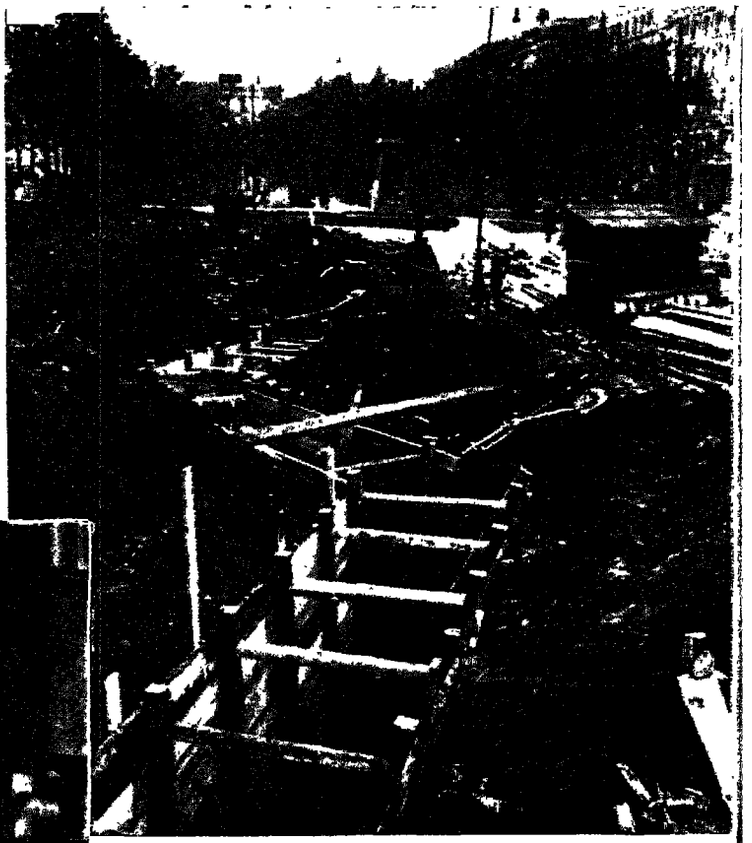


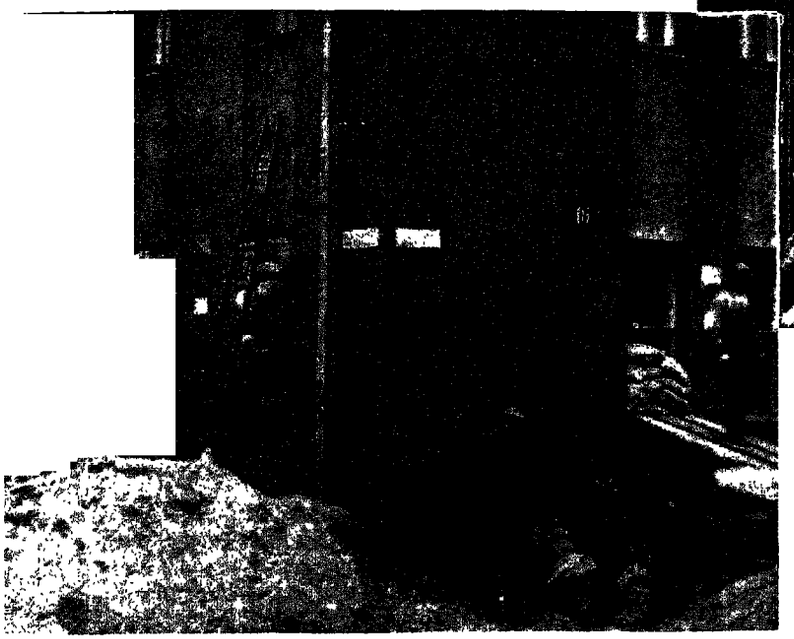
**SWEDEN'S KING GREETS FINLAND'S PRESIDENT**

Following an invitation from the King of Sweden, the Danish and Norwegian Sovereigns and the President of Finland arrived in Stockholm on October 18, 1939, for a conference. Above, President Kallio of Finland (left) is being greeted by King Gustav of Sweden on his arrival.

*Photo, Keystone*



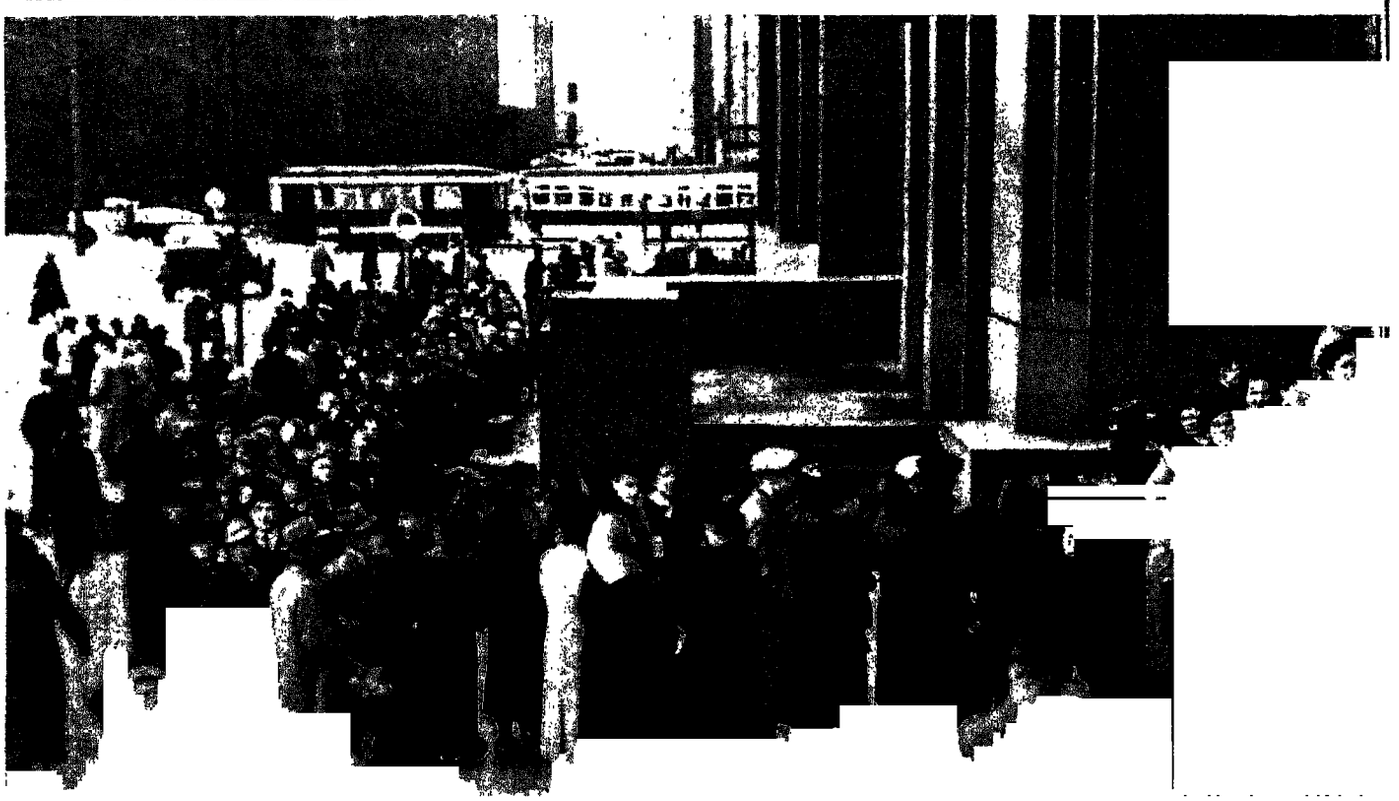




## HOW HELSINKI PREPARED FOR AIR RAIDS

**Here are scenes in Helsinki, Finland's capital, just prior to the outbreak of the Russo-Finnish war. Above, trenches hastily excavated in Helsinki's open spaces. Top left, the well-laden car of an evacuating family. Left, sandbagging an official building in the city. Below, the long queue of people lined up in front of Helsinki's great railway station. Over a hundred thousand people were evacuated before hostilities began.**

*Photos, L.N.A.; Central Press; Keystone; Topical Press*



inability of German fighters, with their limited range, to accompany bombers across the North Sea and back. The Dutch coast is admirably situated for overcoming this difficulty.

The Dutch Government answered German accusations by the publication of an Orange Book, in which Holland's efforts for peace and her protests against the British Contraband Control and against the taking of German passengers from Dutch ships were outlined. The Orange Book mentioned, however, only one established case of British violation of Dutch neutrality—namely, the passage of a British destroyer through the Riouw Channel on the east coast of Sumatra, while journeying from New Zealand to Singapore, and in this respect a satisfactory explanation had been received.

In spite of this Dutch reply, Hitler carried on his feverish consultations with his War Chiefs in Berlin; the German Press continued to advocate occupation of Belgium and Holland to "forestall the Allies," while large numbers of German troops were still being sent to the Dutch frontier. Holland reinforced her frontiers, mined her frontier bridges, constructed tank traps, and began to inundate certain zones of the country, prepared for the worst.

True realization of the seriousness of the German threat was not brought home to the Dutch people and the rest of the world until Tuesday, November 7, 1939, when it was revealed that King Leopold of the Belgians had made a hurried journey at 11 o'clock at night from Brussels to The Hague, in order



**PRIME MINISTER OF BELGIUM**

On September 3, 1939, the Belgian Government issued a declaration of neutrality, and the following day the Belgian Cabinet was reorganized on a basis of national unity, M. Hubert Pierlot (above) becoming Prime Minister.

*Photo, Planet News*

to consult on joint measures for averting the threat to both countries. The meeting was followed by a joint peace offer by the two rulers (*see* Historic Documents, No. 57), addressed to the heads of Great Britain, France, and Germany. In this offer Queen Wilhelmina and King Leopold stated that

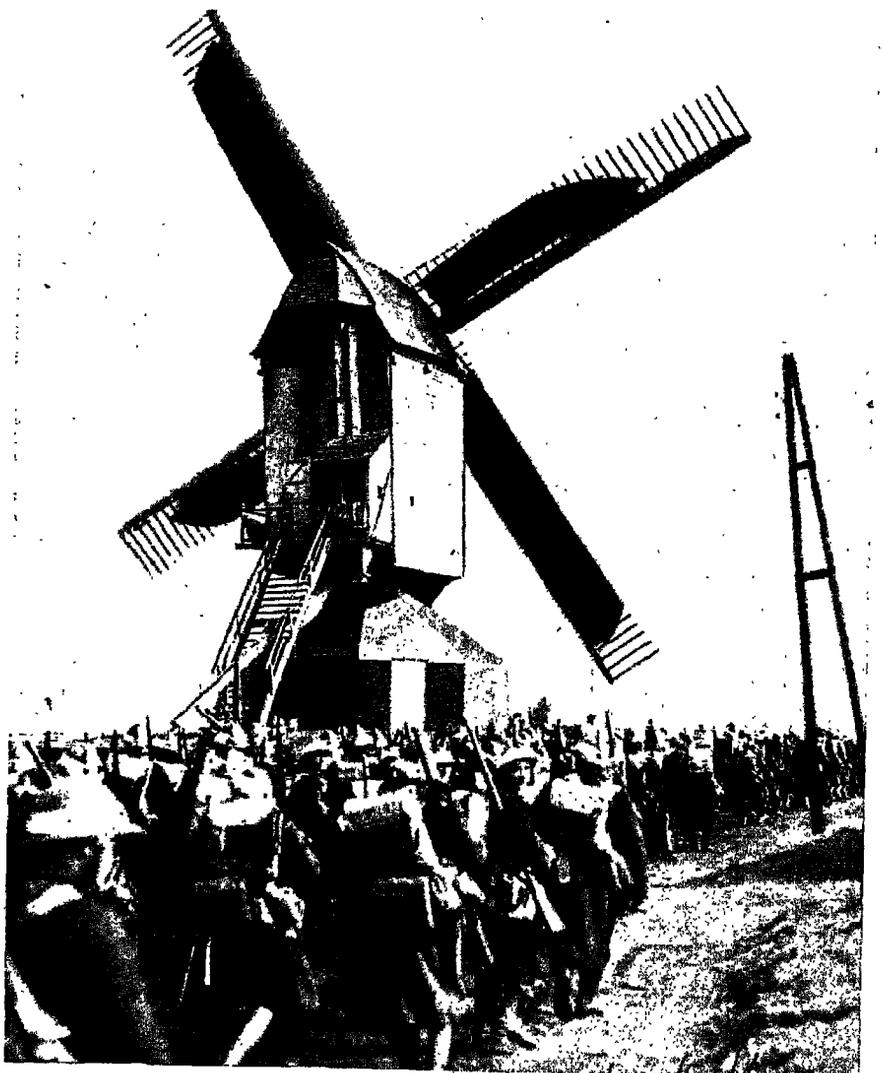
"it was their duty to raise their voices once again before the war breaks out in Western Europe in all its violence."

The statement continued: "If this [offer of good offices] were agreeable to them (the belligerent Powers), we are disposed, by every means at our disposal that they might care to suggest to us, and in a spirit of friendly understanding, to facilitate the ascertaining of the elements of an agreement to be arrived at."

**Belgian-Dutch Peace Proposal**

It was significant that, in addition to the Foreign Ministers of Belgium and Holland, General Reynders, Chief of the Dutch General Staff, was present at the conference. This mediation offer took Britain completely by surprise. It was considered remarkable that the offer was not also addressed to Poland, the ally of Britain and France, without whom no separate peace was possible. There was a general tendency to dismiss the offer as having been made under the pressure of German troop concentrations; while, as Lord Halifax pointed out, the Allies' war aims, connoting rectification of the injustices done to Poland and Czecho-Slovakia, could hardly serve as a basis for peace discussions without a radical change in the outlook of the German rulers.

The French Press went even further. "We want peace just as much as the

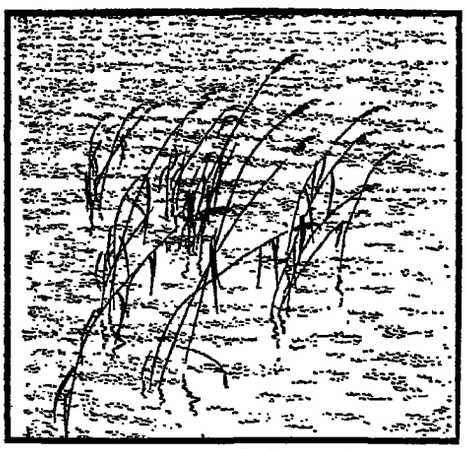


**THEY WERE ON THE 'QUI VIVE'**

With bitter memories of her previous experiences as "the cockpit of Europe," Belgium saw to it that her defence forces were prepared. The photograph above, from the Belgian film "Those Who Watch," shows a column of Belgian infantry on the march.

*Photo, Associated Press*





*From "De Telegraaf," Amsterdam*





## HOLLAND READY TO FIGHT FOR HER LIFE

After over a hundred years of uninterrupted peace Holland was faced, in November, 1939, with the threat of war. Resolved to defend herself against aggression, she took steps to meet any emergency, and her most efficacious method of defence was to flood her low-lying country. The delicate yet forcible Dutch cartoon above, reminiscent of a print by Hiroshige, is reproduced from "De Telegraaf." It is captioned : "Stronger than concrete, more durable than steel, a better obstacle than barbed wire, friend of our friends, foe of our foes, our Maginot Line, our Siegfried Line—our Water Line!" Compare this sketch with the foreground of the photograph at the top of the page, where Dutch artillery are testing the effectiveness of this "Water Line." The other photos show : right, centre, A.R.P. demonstration in a Dutch town, and, lower, Dutch soldiers manning a trench near the German frontier.

*Photos, Associated Press; New Age; Planet News*




**DEFENCES OF THE LOW COUNTRIES**

*The map above shows the defence systems Germany would have to overcome if she attempted the invasion of Holland or Belgium. The rivers Yssel and Maas constitute Holland's first line of defence, and in addition large tracts of the country can be flooded. Belgium is defended to the north by the fortified Albert Canal and on the east by the fortified heights between Liége and Dinant.*
*Courtesy of "News Chronicle"*

Netherlands and Belgium," announced "Figaro." "We have shown our goodwill innumerable times. But we want a just peace. Germany should first give Austria back to the Austrians, Bohemia to the Czechs, and Poland to the Poles, and, in addition, give guarantees for a permanent peace."

[*See* Historic Documents Nos. 57–59 for the text of the Note and the British and French replies.]

Germany, after watching British and French reactions, did not even trouble to reply to the Dutch-Belgian offer, Herr von Ribbentrop contenting himself with verbal remarks to the Dutch and Belgian diplomatic representatives in Berlin. Meanwhile, German preparations on the Dutch frontier went on. The Dutch "Allgemeen Handelsblad" reported that German troops from Poland were replacing the Second Reserve soldiers formerly on the German-Dutch frontier. Belgium requisitioned a number of omnibuses and private cars in Brussels for frontier service. Air-raid shelters began to appear in The Hague and other Dutch towns. British subjects in Holland were advised to leave. Holland cancelled all leave for the military, while Belgium put 600,000 men on a war footing.

In many circles it was thought that Armistice Day, November 11, 1939, would be chosen by Hitler for striking at Holland, thus providing a "victory" with which to wipe out Germany's defeat of 21 years ago. But the day passed without incident, in spite of the most alarming rumours among the population of Holland—rumours for which the silence of the Government, in the opinion of many prominent Dutchmen, was largely responsible. The Dutch Government's policy seemed to have been to avoid all mention of the possibility of an invasion, while taking every measure to meet it.

The reasons which caused Germany's change of attitude towards Holland and the postponement of the apparently threatened invasion were not revealed. The first indication of a relaxation of tension came with a statement by a Berlin Foreign Office official, quoted in the Dutch newspaper "Handelsblad." This declared that the German troops near the Dutch frontier were on manœuvres, and that Germany "did not dream of violating the neutrality of Holland or Belgium." There were also assurances from Germany that her troops were intended partly as reserve forces for the Siegfried Line and partly for the northward extension of the line. The Dutch Government attributed many of the reports of an intended German invasion to foreign correspondents, who were urged to "use consideration." Nevertheless, after the lapse of some days, as the situation became clearer, it became generally accepted in neutral countries that Holland had actually been threatened by Germany.

**Invasion Postponed**

The report gaining most credence was that Germany had assumed that Belgium would make it impossible for the Allies to come to Holland's aid if Holland were attacked. The German Ambassador in Brussels, however, these reports added, was given clearly to understand on the eve of the intended invasion—November 10—that an invasion of Holland would threaten Belgium and would lead to Belgian mobilization. This declaration was handed to the German Ambassador in Brussels after a meeting between King Leopold, M. Pierlot, the Belgian Prime Minister, and M. Denis, Minister of Defence, the same day. It was also believed that the Belgian declaration worked like a bombshell among German generals, who had completed detailed plans for the invasion, and they had thereupon declared their plan unworkable.

It was also stated in neutral circles that Herr von Ribbentrop, the German Foreign Minister, had at the same time learnt from an authoritative source that

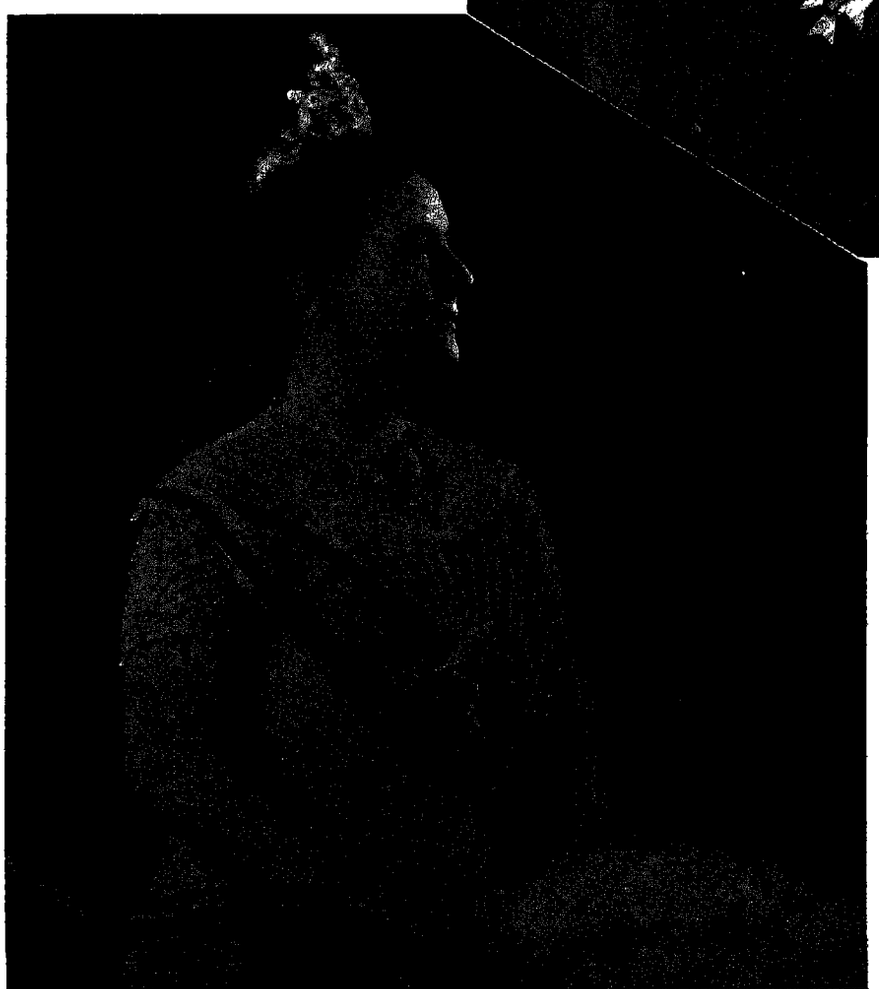
L. DURGA SAH THULGHARIA
MUNICIPAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

a German invasion of Belgium would have unforeseeable consequences in the United States, while Italy and Spain are said to have made their influence felt in Berlin against the projected invasion. Another theory was that Holland and Belgium were informed about German plans for a violent attack upon Great Britain at an early date by aeroplane and by submarine, and a hint was given by Berlin that the Low Countries should adopt as indulgent an attitude as their neutrality would allow in the case of German squadrons flying over their territory or German submarines seeking shelter in their territorial waters. The Dutch and Belgian Governments, thereupon, this theory adds, informed Germany that their neutrality would be ensured by every means in their power. This, some observers believed, explained the official Dutch



**QUEEN OF THE NETHERLANDS**

On November 6, 1939, King Leopold went to The Hague to consult with Queen Wilhelmina on problems common to the security of their two countries. The Queen (below) succeeded to the throne in 1890.
*Photo, Wide World*



**KING OF THE BELGIANS**

Leopold III, King of the Belgians (above), was born in 1901 and succeeded to the throne on the death of King Albert in 1934. During the war of 1914-18 he served as a simple soldier in the 12th Belgian Regiment.
*Photo, Speaight*

denials of pressure on the one hand and the measures of precaution on the other.

Whatever the truth of these reports—and, it may be added, stories of Italian intervention were expressly denied in Rome—the Dutch taxpayer was called upon to grant a second extraordinary defence credit of 100,000,000 florins (about £13,000,000), and it is estimated that one half of this amount was spent in thirty days in pre-mobilization preparations.

One neutral, at least, was not afraid to clarify its position and take up a definite stand with the Allies in the second phase of the war. Turkey, a country whose fighting qualities Britain learned to respect during the war of 1914–18, remained loyal to her pledges to Britain and signed, on October 19, 1939, a Treaty of Mutual Assistance with Britain and France. Under the Treaty, the most [illegible]

success for the Democracies since the war began, Britain and France agreed to come to the assistance of Turkey if an act of aggression were committed against that country by a European Power, or in the event of aggression by a European Power leading to war in the Mediterranean in which Turkey became involved.

Turkey, for her part, agreed to reciprocate if Britain and France became involved in war in the Mediterranean area as a result of aggression by a European Power, or if Britain and France became engaged in hostilities by virtue of their guarantees to Greece and Rumania. Turkey stipulated, however, that the obligations of the Treaty could not compel her to action which would involve hostilities with the U.S.S.R.

It is difficult to over-estimate the far-reaching significance of this Treaty as it affected the Dardanelles and stability in the Balkans area. By a stroke of the pen Britain had achieved what an expensive expeditionary force had failed to obtain during the war of 1914–18—namely, the passage of the Dardanelles for her warships. The Treaty gave new confidence to Rumania, who could now rely on British naval help reaching her in the event of aggression by Germany. It enhanced Turkey's standing among her Balkan allies and acted as a brake on the pro-Russian enthusiasm of many Bulgarians, who were looking to their great nation of brother-Slavs to achieve the restoration of territories lost in the Balkan war and in that of 1914–18. The Treaty was also a powerful deterrent to adventurist ambition of any great Mediterranean Power which might have sought to increase its influence while other Powers were engaged in major hostilities elsewhere. The Treaty was concluded for a period of fifteen years.

At a later stage in this narrative a survey will be given of the reactions to the Pact in Russia, the Balkan countries, Hungary and Italy, and the diplomatic activity to which it gave rise in the efforts to form a neutral bloc against Russian or German aggression.



Photo, Topical Press

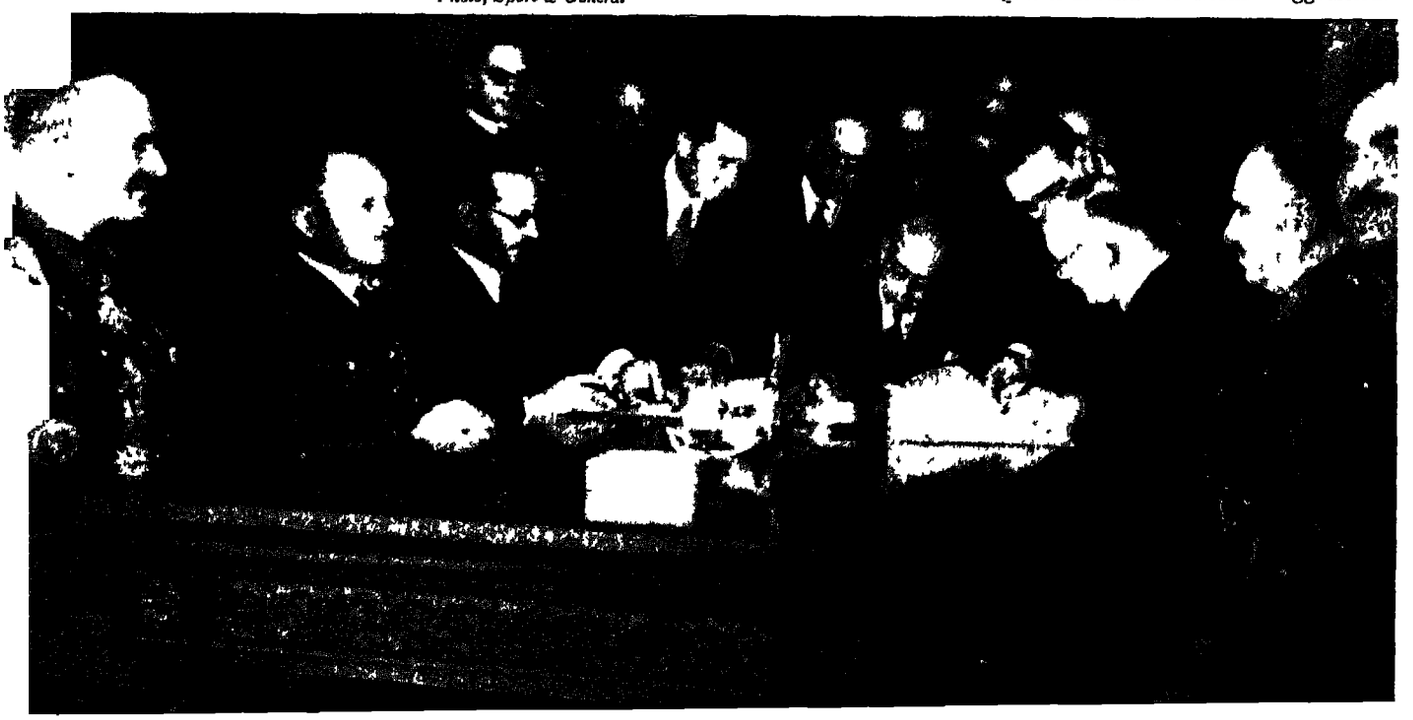
**BIRDWOOD GREETS FORMER OPPONENT**

On October 3, 1939, a Turkish Military Mission, under the leadership of General Kiazim Orbay, arrived in London to discuss matters of common interest between Britain and Turkey. General Orbay is here seen being greeted on his arrival in London by Field-Marshal Lord Birdwood, who, a quarter of a century before, had fought against the Turks at Gallipoli

**ALLIES' DIPLOMATIC VICTORY IN THE NEAR EAST**

Soon after the Turkish Military Mission had arrived in London there was signed at Ankara, on October 19, 1939, an Anglo-French-Turkish Treaty, providing for mutual assistance in the event of an act of aggression by a European power against any of the signatories leading to war in the Mediterranean area. On the left of the photograph below is General Sir A. P. Wavell, next to whom sits General Weygand. Dr. Saydam, President of the Turkish Council, is signing the treaty, while second from right is Marshal Tchakmak, Chief of the Turkish General Staff

*Photo, Sport & General*



## *Historic Documents. LX*

# *AMERICA'S FAMOUS 'CASH AND CARRY' ACT*

By the passing of the Neutrality Act on November 3, 1939, the United States lifted the embargo on the sale of arms to belligerent countries, with the proviso that such arms must be paid for in advance and carried away in the ships of the purchasing country. The practical result was to make America's vast arsenal immediately available to the Allies. We give below the most important clauses of the Act.

WHEREAS the United States, desiring to preserve its neutrality in wars between foreign States and desiring also to avoid involvement therein, voluntarily imposes upon its nationals by domestic legislation the restrictions set out in this joint resolution; and

Whereas by so doing the United States waives none of its own rights and privileges, or those of any of its nationals, under international law, and expressly reserves all the rights and privileges to which it and its nationals are entitled under the law of nations . . . therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

*Section* 1 (*a*) That whenever the President or the Congress, by concurrent resolution, shall find that there exists a state of war between foreign States, and that it is necessary to promote the security or preserve the peace of the United States to protect the lives of citizens of the United States, the President shall issue a proclamation naming the States involved . . . .

*Section* 2 (*a*) Whenever the President shall have issued a proclamation under the authority of Section 1 (*a*) it shall thereafter be unlawful for any American vessel to carry any passengers or any articles or materials to any State named in such proclamation. . . .

(*c*) Whenever the President shall have issued a proclamation under the authority of Section 1 (*a*) it shall thereafter be unlawful to export or transport, or attempt to export or transport, or cause to be exported or transported, from the United States to any State named in such proclamation, any articles or materials (except copyright articles or materials) until all right, title and interest therein shall have been transferred to some foreign government, agency, institution, association, partnership, corporation or national. . . .

Issuance of a bill of lading under which title to the goods shipped passes to the purchaser unconditionally upon delivery of the goods to carrier, shall constitute a transfer of all right, title and interest therein . . . .

(*f*) The provisions of subsection (*a*) of this Section shall not apply to transportation by American vessels on or over lakes, rivers and inland waters bordering on the United States, or to transportation by aircraft on or over lands bordering on the United States; and the provisions of subsection (*c*) of this Section shall not apply to such transportation of any articles or materials other than articles listed in a proclamation issued under the authority of Section 12 (*i*) or to any other transportation on or over lands bordering on the United States of any articles or materials other than articles listed in a proclamation issued under the authority of Section 12 (*i*). . . .

### Zones Open to American Traffic

THE provisions of subsections (*a*) and (*c*) of this Section shall not apply to transportation by American vessels (other than aircraft) of mail, passengers, or any articles or materials (except articles or materials listed in a proclamation issued under the authority of Section 12 (*i*) (1) to any port in the Western Hemisphere north of thirty-five degrees north latitude, (2) to any port in the Western Hemisphere north of thirty-five degrees north latitude and west of sixty-six degrees west longitude, (3) to any port on the Pacific or Indian Oceans, including the China Sea, the Tasman Sea, the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea and any other dependent waters of either of such oceans, seas or bays, or (4) to any port on the Atlantic Ocean or its dependent waters south of thirty degrees north latitude. The exceptions contained in this subsection shall not apply to any such port which is included within a combat area as defined in Section 3, which applies to such vessels. . . .

*Section* 3 (*a*) Whenever the President shall have issued a proclamation under the authority of Section 1 (*a*), and he shall thereafter find that the protection of citizens of the United States so requires, he shall, by proclamation, define combat areas, and thereafter it shall be unlawful, except under such rules and regulations as may be prescribed, for any citizen of the United States or any American vessel to proceed into or through any such combat area. . . .

*Section* 3 (*a*) Whenever the President shall have issued a proclamation under the authority of Section 1 (*a*) it shall thereafter be unlawful for any citizen of the United States to travel on any vessel of any State named in such proclamation except in accordance with such rules and regulations as may be prescribed. . . .

*Section* 6 Whenever the President shall have issued a proclamation under the authority of Section 1 (*a*), it shall thereafter be unlawful, until such proclamation is revoked, for any American vessel, engaged in commerce with any foreign State, to be armed, except with small arms and ammunition therefor, which the President may deem necessary and shall publicly designate for the preservation of discipline aboard any such vessel. . . .

*Section* 11 Whenever, during any war in which the United States is neutral, the President shall find that special restrictions placed on the use of the ports and territorial waters of the United States by the submarines or armed merchant vessels of a foreign State will serve to maintain peace between the United States and the foreign States, or to protect the commercial interests of the United States and its citizens, or to promote the security of the United States, and shall make proclamation thereof, it shall thereafter be unlawful for any such submarine or armed merchant vessel to enter a port or the territorial waters of the United States or to depart therefrom, except under such conditions and subject to such limitations as the President may prescribe. . . .

### Regulations Governing Export of Arms

SECTION 12 (*a*) There is hereby established a National Munitions Control Board. The Board shall consist of the Secretary of State . . . the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Secretary of Commerce. Except as otherwise provided in this Section, or by other law, the administration of this Section is vested in the Secretary of State. . . .

(*b*) Every person who engages in the business of manufacturing, exporting or importing any arms, ammunition or implements of war listed in a proclamation issued under authority of subsection (*i*) of this Section, whether as an exporter, importer, manufacturer or dealer, shall register with the Secretary of State his name, or business name, principal place of business and places of business in the United States, and a list of the arms, ammunition and implements of war which he manufactures, imports or exports. . . .

(*d*) It shall be unlawful for any person to export, or attempt to export, from the United States to any other State, any arms, ammunition, or implements of war listed in a proclamation issued under the authority of subsection (*i*) of this Section, or to import, or attempt to import, to the United States from any other State, any of the arms, ammunition, or implements of war listed in any such proclamation, without first having submitted to the Secretary of State the name of the purchaser and the terms of sale and having obtained a licence therefor. . . .

(*i*) The President is hereby authorized to proclaim upon recommendation of the Board from time to time a list of articles which shall be considered arms, ammunition and implements of war for the purposes of this Section.

SECTION 14 (*a*) It will be unlawful for any vessel belonging to or operating under the jurisdiction of any foreign State to use the flag of the United States thereon, to make use of any distinctive signs or markings, indicating that the same is an American vessel. . . .

Chapter 28

# AMERICA LIFTS THE ARMS EMBARGO AND OPENS HER ARSENAL TO THE ALLIES

*How the Nazis Antagonized the U.S.A.—Passing of the Neutrality Act—The 'City of Flint' Affair—America's Desire for Technical Neutrality—Far-reaching Effects of the Neutrality Legislation—Enormous Productive Capacity of the United States*

In vital questions of national policy there may be such a thing as a foregone conclusion, but while the to-and-fro of violent political debate continues it always seems that a logical certainty may prove a broken reed in the ultimate event. Reason said that the United States would surely repeal the embargo on war materials which formed a part of America's Neutrality Law. Nevertheless, it was only after a month of fierce debate that the Senate, on October 27, 1939, voted for repeal and adopted the revised Neutrality Bill sponsored by the Roosevelt Administration. And the news was received in the United States, as well as in the Allied countries, with evident relief as well as pleasure. The vote, of 63 in favour to 30 against, was a satisfactory and conclusive one, roughly fulfilling the best-informed anticipations.

The campaign that had resulted in this victory had been conducted by the Administration on a non-party basis, so that, although it was a moral victory for the President, the ground was largely cut away from under the feet of those malcontent and influential Republicans who feared that if the repeal were not defeated they could not hope to defeat the Democratic Party, led for a third term by Roosevelt, at the next elections. Twelve of the opposition votes were Democratic and eight supporters of the Bill were Republicans.

Another and a stiffer hurdle had yet to be taken by the Administration—the vote of the House of Representatives, which promised to be more divided than the Senate and more influenced by party considerations. Meanwhile, "gentlemen's agreements" were being made between Allied representatives and American manufacturers concerning orders for supplies, and the actual and prospective trade with Britain and France became certainly an influence on the side of the repeal of an embargo which unjustly put the maritime powers at a disadvantage. The "cash and carry" provisions of the Neutrality Bill, moreover, had been good American law until early in 1939, and though the restrictions were severe against munitions being carried in American ships, they were clearly in American eyes a safeguard of United States' neutrality.

Once more the Nazis by their own acts helped to ensure this first big political victory for Roosevelt's policy, for while the Senate vote was still in the melting-pot, the American press was "splashing" as an international sensation the stupid seizure by a German raider of an American steamship, "City of Flint" (*see* Chapter 23). This psychological blunder on October 24 came at the same time as the negotiations between the Soviet and Finland—acting as a warning to Americans, whose sympathies were strongly on the side of Finland against Stalin's cat-and-mouse parleys to secure control of strategic territory in return for unimportant concessions.

**Nazis Offend the U.S.A.**

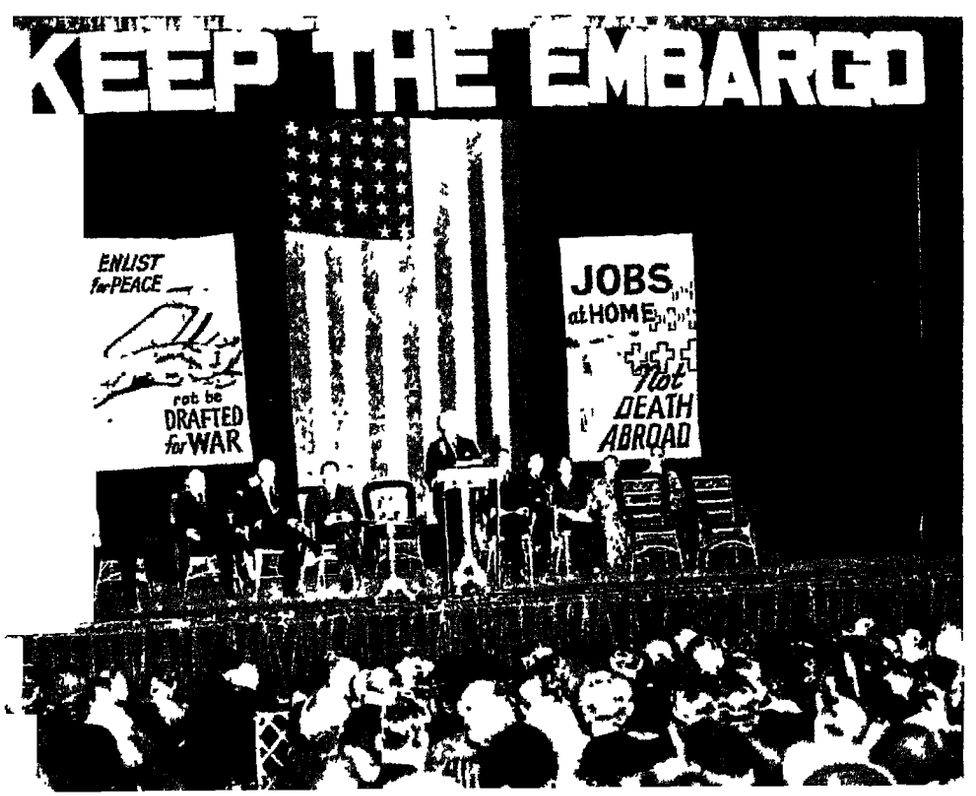
Although the Soviet's policy was ultimately directed against German influence in the eastern Baltic, it also threatened Finnish independence, which the Finns showed they were determined to preserve. In this they had the moral support of the United States, as well as of their natural allies, Sweden and Norway. Pro-Ally sentiments in the United States were deepened by the consequences, which followed quickly. It was learnt that the "City of Flint" had been captured by the German battleship "Deutschland," which must have evaded the British blockade and have been operating in the Atlantic. The American steamer, with a cargo of grain, tractors, hides, wax and fruit, had been seized on the high seas, and by a powerful battleship which could reach any of the Americas. The Germans put a prize crew on board and took the vessel into Kola Bay, near Murmansk, a Soviet port.

On October 31 Finland rejected the Soviet demand for military bases on

**OPPONENTS OF THE U.S. NEUTRALITY BILL**

**Although President Roosevelt won the day in his endeavour to have the Arms Embargo repealed, it was not without considerable opposition from the "Isolationists." Below, a mass meeting at Washington, D.C., organized by various "pacifist" organizations, to "keep America out of the war" by voting against the revised Neutrality Bill.**

*Photo, Planet News*





*Photo, Planet News*

ROOSEVELT'S TRIUMPH SEALED

This is the scene at Washington, D.C., as President Roosevelt signed the new U.S. Neutrality Bill on November 4, 1939. Watching him are (left to right) Adolphe Berle (Assistant Secretary of State); Senator Key Pittman; Mr. William Bankhead; Mr. Cordell Hull (Secretary of State); Mr. John N. Garner (U.S. Vice-President); and Senators C. McNary and Alben W. Barkley

Finnish territory and began laying mines at the port of Hanko, at the entrance of the Gulf of Finland. The Soviet had abandoned its demands for the military bases, but was still demanding control of this ice-free port. In America, no less than in Britain and Scandinavia, the undaunted firmness of Finland in resisting Soviet pressure was hailed with enthusiasm, if not with much serious understanding of Russian policy. But an element of comedy had entered into the "City of Flint" affair, which might have mollified American irritation at Russia, for the Germans were ordered by the Soviet to take the steamer away.

American *amour-propre*, already upset by the seizure of the vessel, was wounded. The United States Ambassador in Moscow was denied information for a week about the fate of the steamer and her American crew, and not until the Russian official Tass Agency reported that the ship had been staying at Murmansk to repair her engines, and had left again on October 28, was either the Ambassador or the American public told anything. Then the German official radio informed the world that the steamer had left Murmansk on the previous day, in charge of the prize crew. The American crew were virtually prisoners on board. American opinion was echoed in the State Department's review of events issued on October 28, in which Russia was accused of "withholding adequate co-operation" with the American Government and of unneutral conduct favourable to Germany. Nobody believed the Russian excuse for allowing the "City of Flint" to stay at Murmansk, and subsequently going away with both crews on board, the Germans being still in charge. The story of her unseaworthiness sounded too much like an afterthought, when the Soviet leaders had realized all the implications of giving hospitality to their compromising visitor.

Nor was American anger appeased when Molotov, Commissar for Foreign Affairs, addressed the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union on October 31 and, in a detailed attack upon the Western Democracies as ideological aggressors, attributed the war to the aims of Britain and France and the support of these Powers by the United States. Molotov's reiteration of Soviet neutrality in the same speech did nothing to excuse official Soviet conduct in the "City of Flint" affair, especially as it was accompanied by a reaffirmation of moral support for Germany "in her efforts for peace."

It is true that, in spite of the Soviet Commissar's verbally hostile tone to America and the Allies, his statement threw a wet blanket over Germany's expectations (rather rashly announced by Nazi propaganda) of more active Soviet help that would be a decisive factor in the war. But the comic climax to the "City of Flint" interlude was delayed until November 4, and the Americans after further suspense had heard merely that she had anchored at Haugesund, in Norway, still in charge of the German prize crew.

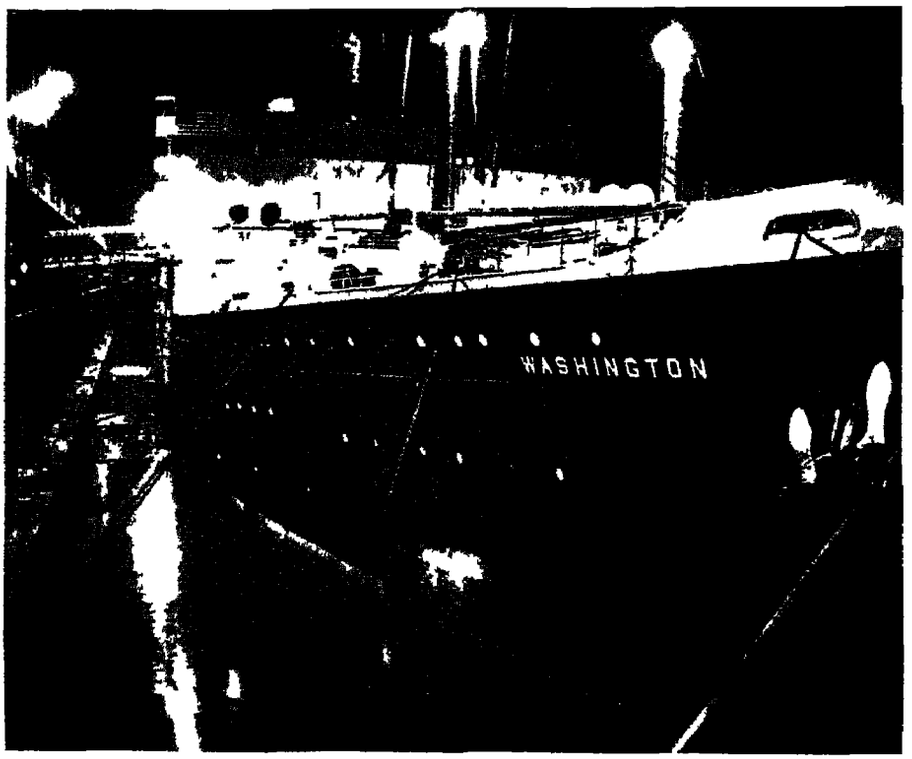
Molotov Angers U.S.A.

On November 2 the House of Representatives gave a more than cautious pro-

in favour of repeal of the Arms Embargo, approving the Neutrality Bill by 243 votes to 172.

To continue this chronological comparison, on November 4 the German prize crew of the "City of Flint" were interned by the Norwegians, as the Nazis had violated international law

The same day, a Saturday, the President of the United States put his signature to the Neutrality Bill. This week-end also the Finnish delegation to Moscow renewed their discussions at the




THE SHIP THAT DID NOT SAIL

**The passing of the United States revised Neutrality Bill struck a severe blow at American shipping, which was prohibited from entering belligerent waters. Above, the S.S. "Washington," with lights ablaze, is seen at her New York pier, following the announcement that her sailing would be postponed indefinitely.**

*Photo, Keystone*

Kremlin of the Soviet proposals for "mutual assistance," which were seen to resemble Nazi tactics in method, though without any sign of the typically German brutality and offensiveness.

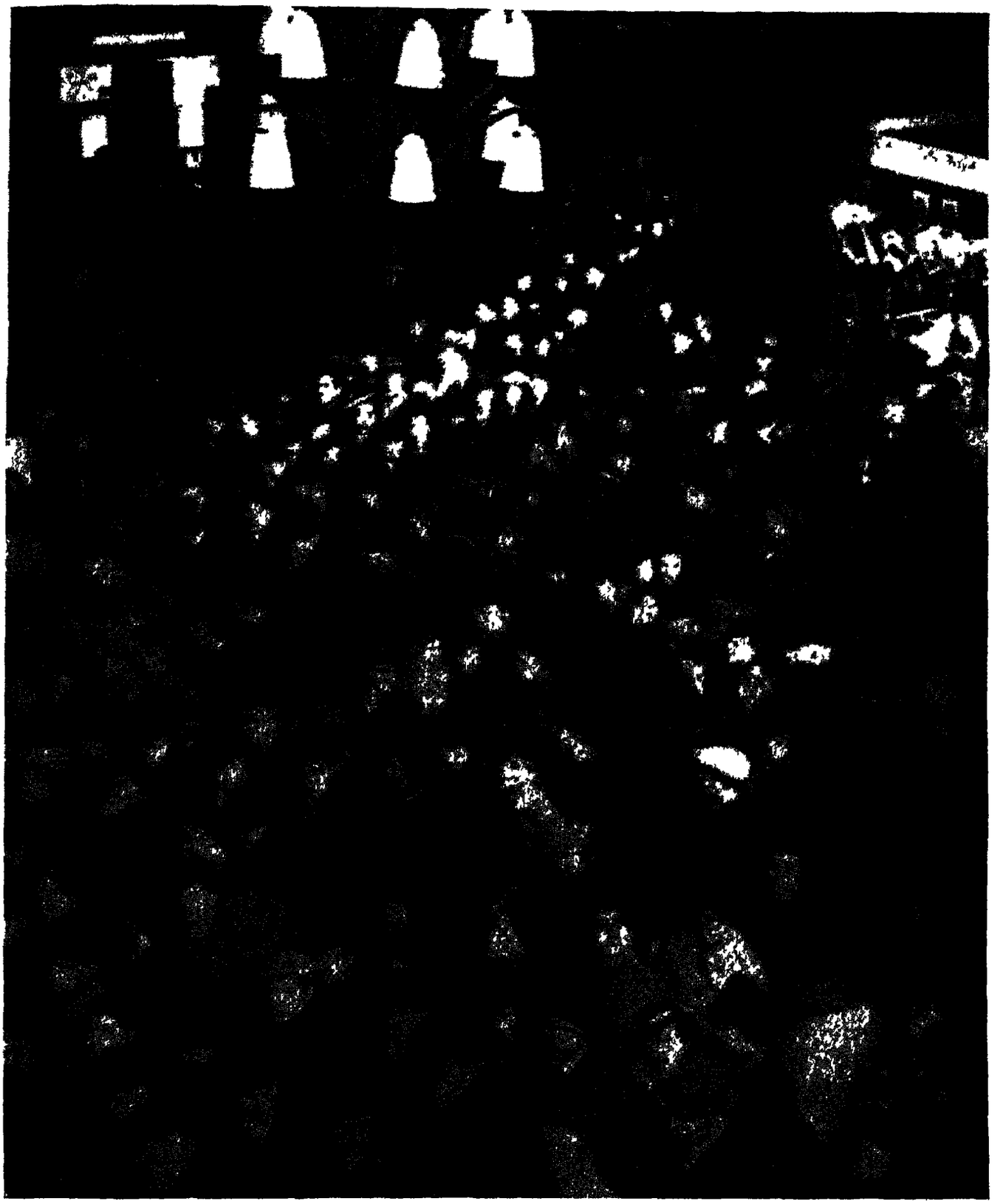
In acting upon their legal rights in the "City of Flint" affair, the Norwegian Government undoubtedly chose to obtain American sympathy rather than to mollify the angry Nazis. The Norwegians rejected the German protest at the internment of the prize crew, and released the ship with its original American crew in charge. She returned to Bergen under the American flag. The futile fury of the Nazis was answered by a résumé of the ship's adventures, issued by the Norwegian Foreign Ministry. This stated that the vessel arrived at Tromsoe with a German prize crew on October 20, and asked permission to fill up with water. This, quite legally, was given, and the ship was only detained long enough to set free and land the crew of the British steamship "Stonegate," sunk by the "Deutschland" a few days before the seizure of the "City of Flint." According to Norwegian neutrality regulations, the Nazis were allowed to sail the ship within Norwegian territorial waters for the next twenty-four hours after its departure from Tromsoe Instead of taking the vessel straight to Germany, the prize crew sailed her northward to Murmansk. The Soviet method of dealing with the situation, as already described, resulted in another hurried departure, and the wanderer turned up at Tromsoe again on October 31. She stayed for only three hours and was escorted away by a Norwegian warship. This warship was later relieved by another, and when the vessels were near Haugesund the Nazi commander of the prize crew signalled that he must stop at Haugesund because he had a sick man on board. The Norwegian escort, "Olav Tryggvason," sent a surgeon over, who discovered that the sick man had merely a slight leg injury. The Nazi commander was told that he could not stop at Haugesund, and he professed to agree to this ruling; but at dusk on November 3 he anchored in the port, and, when questioned for his reason, said he was acting on orders from his Government. The Norwegians thereupon interned the prize crew and released the ship, which left next morning under her American captain and crew.

This curious episode of the "City of Flint," trivial in itself, provided an example of the indirectly important events of war. Besides exacerbating American opinion at a most vital political phase, while the American Neutrality Bill was being fought over, it can be seen as a perfect illustration of Nazi stupidity. In reviewing the episode it seems clear that the seizure of the American vessel was not a mistake, but the result of calculation. Probably the Nazis hoped to frighten Americans as well as cause international complications.

**Trivial Cause—Tremendous Effect**

In Mussolini's newspaper, "Il Popolo d'Italia," on October 24, an article signed by Luigi Barzini ostensibly set out to prove that American intervention in the Second Great War was out of the question although awaited by the Allies, but in effect the article was a review of German policy towards America in the war of 1914–18. The writer traced the insults and injuries inflicted by the Germans upon the United States, which have been regarded as typical German blunders, and declared that they were due to a deliberate policy of forcing the United States into the war in order to check the stream of American supplies to the Allies. The theory was that the Americans, in rearming themselves and supplying their own hastily prepared forces, would have no spare supplies for Britain and France. In the event this proved a colossal blunder.

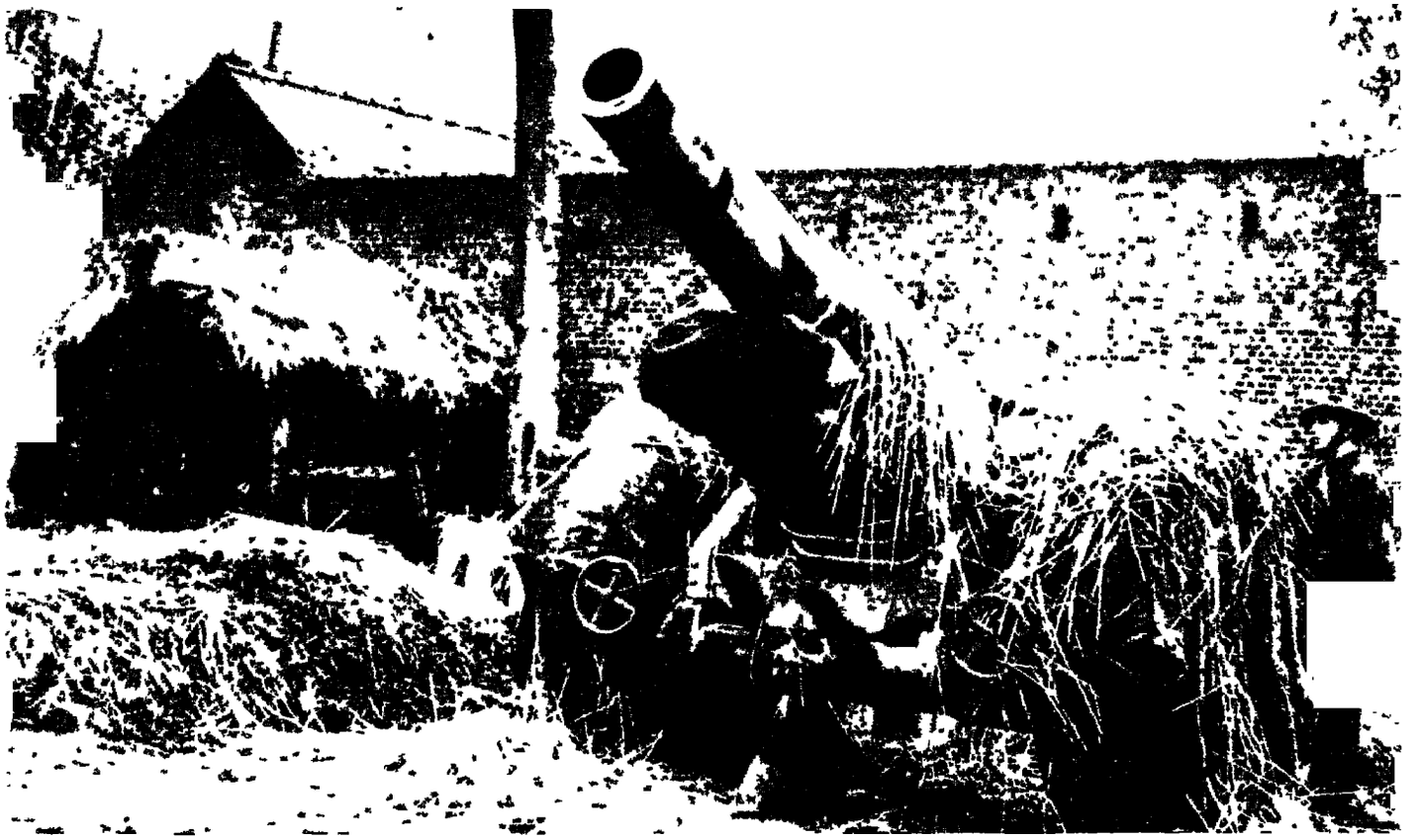
If Mussolini's scribe was correct, the Germans realized in 1939 that America need not be brought into the war again, and that Americans had no intention of coming into it. Possibly their affronts to American dignity and sense of justice throughout September and October, 1939, were based upon an ill-founded confidence in the value of Soviet assistance, and a realization that the repeal of the Arms Embargo was so strictly in accordance with American neutrality that it could not be avoided. It is more likely that, as the Germans were always better at tactics than long-range strategy in the military field, the same inventive but short-sighted cunning was the clue to their psychological blunders. By the middle of November they had succeeded in alienating sympathy in all the neutral countries of Europe as well as in America.



**FINNISH CIVILIANS FLEE THE AIR MENACE**

Towards the end of November, 1939, many thousands of the inhabitants of Helsinki, Finland's capital, fearing the worst, left by train. The photograph above shows a crowd waiting for trains on the platform of the Helsinki Central Station. Their fears were only too well justified, for on November 30 Helsinki, as well as other Finnish towns, was bombed by Soviet warplanes.

*Photo, Wide World*





## BRITISH TROOPS TAKE UP THEIR STATIONS

At the top of the page is seen a British howitzer camouflaged among farmyard surroundings in north-eastern France The lower picture shows British troops finishing emplacements for an anti-aircraft unit An anti-aircraft gun is seen in the background, while in the foreground men are setting up the predictor.

*British Official Photographs: Crown copyright*

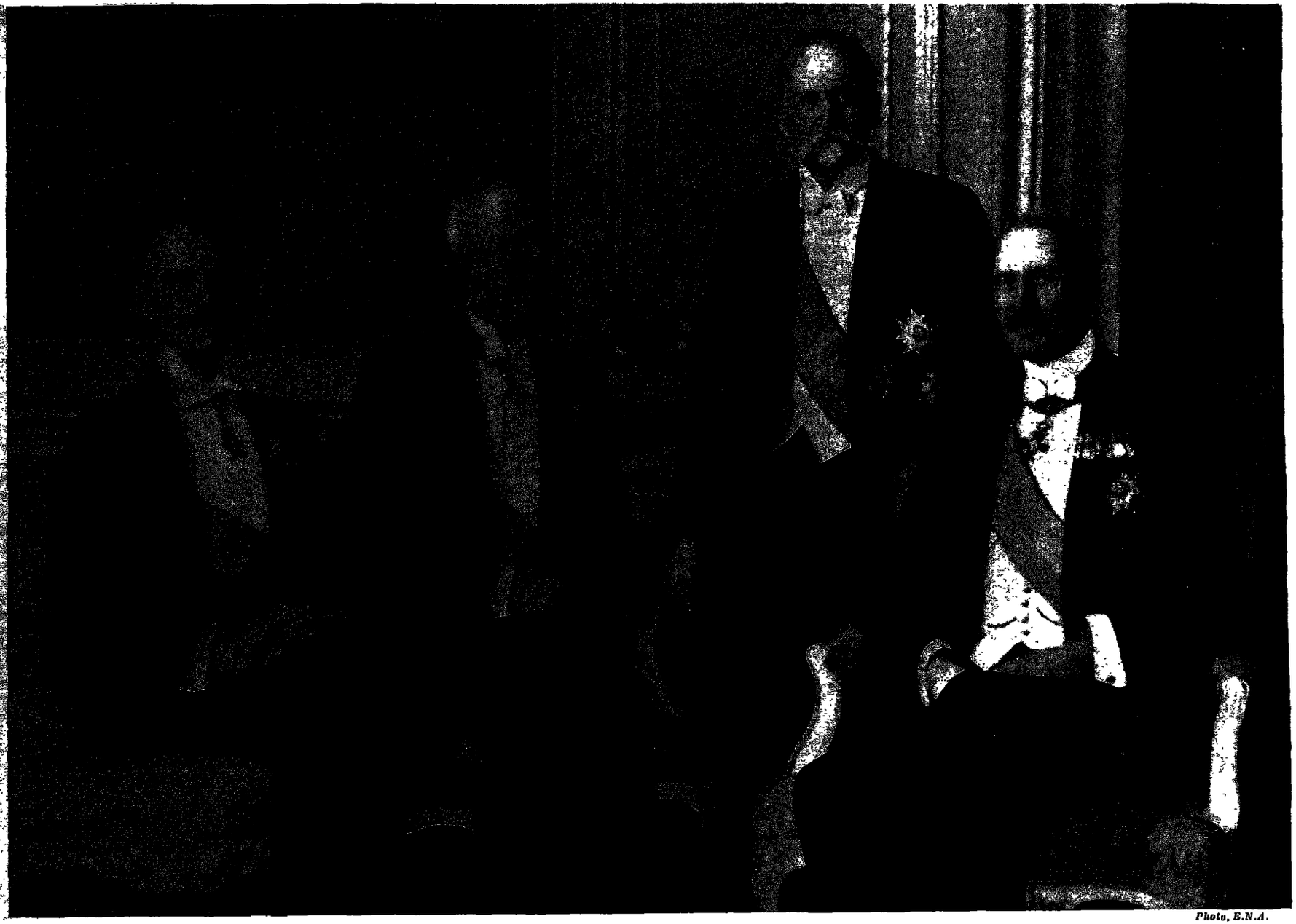




SOLDIERS OF FRANCE IN THE WAR ZONE

In the upper photograph two French sentinels, in a camouflaged post on the roof, are guarding a factory in the war zone French motorized troops are seen in the lower picture in a village somewhere behind the Western Front, parading before their commanding officers

*Photos, courtesy of the French Embassy, Planet News*



*Photo, E.N.A.*

## SCANDINAVIAN RULERS IN CONFERENCE

On October 18, 1939, Stockholm greeted the Kings of Denmark and Norway and the President of Finland, who came to confer with the King of Sweden on the position of the Scandinavian countries with regard to the war in general and the threat to Finland in particular. The photograph above, taken at this Stockholm conference, shows, from left to right, King Haakon of Norway, King Gustav of Sweden, President Kallio of Finland and King Christian of Denmark.

Whether the Nazi Government contained enough political intelligence or not to anticipate the repeal of the Arms Embargo, the accomplished fact produced unmistakable reactions of annoyance and scarcely concealed fear. This attitude was reflected by the immediate comment in the "Deutsche diplomatisch-politische Korrespondenz":

"One cannot understand how a neutral Power can bring itself to add fuel to the blaze of war by the export of arms to belligerents. Such a Power is helping both to carry on and prolong a war. Nobody knows better than America that every day the war is prolonged the danger of its spreading is increased—and consequently the danger that America too may become involved. A great responsibility now rests on President Roosevelt, to whose discretion Congress has left the execution of the Neutrality Act."

The Administration's execution of the Neutrality Act very quickly promised to express the strong anti-Nazi sentiment of America as well as the desire for real neutrality. In interpreting certain prohibitory clauses, such as the "no credit" formula and the compulsion of purchasers to carry their own war materials, it was seen that, whenever possible, credit would be given—for instance, for material only indirectly describable as "war supplies," such as cable, telephone, wireless and telegraph equipment. And as for aeroplanes, these might be flown to the Canadian frontier or to a United States shipping port, but no farther, so that any enterprising American firm that might have been required to face the hostility of public opinion and to fly 'planes to Germany was saved from any possible temptation.

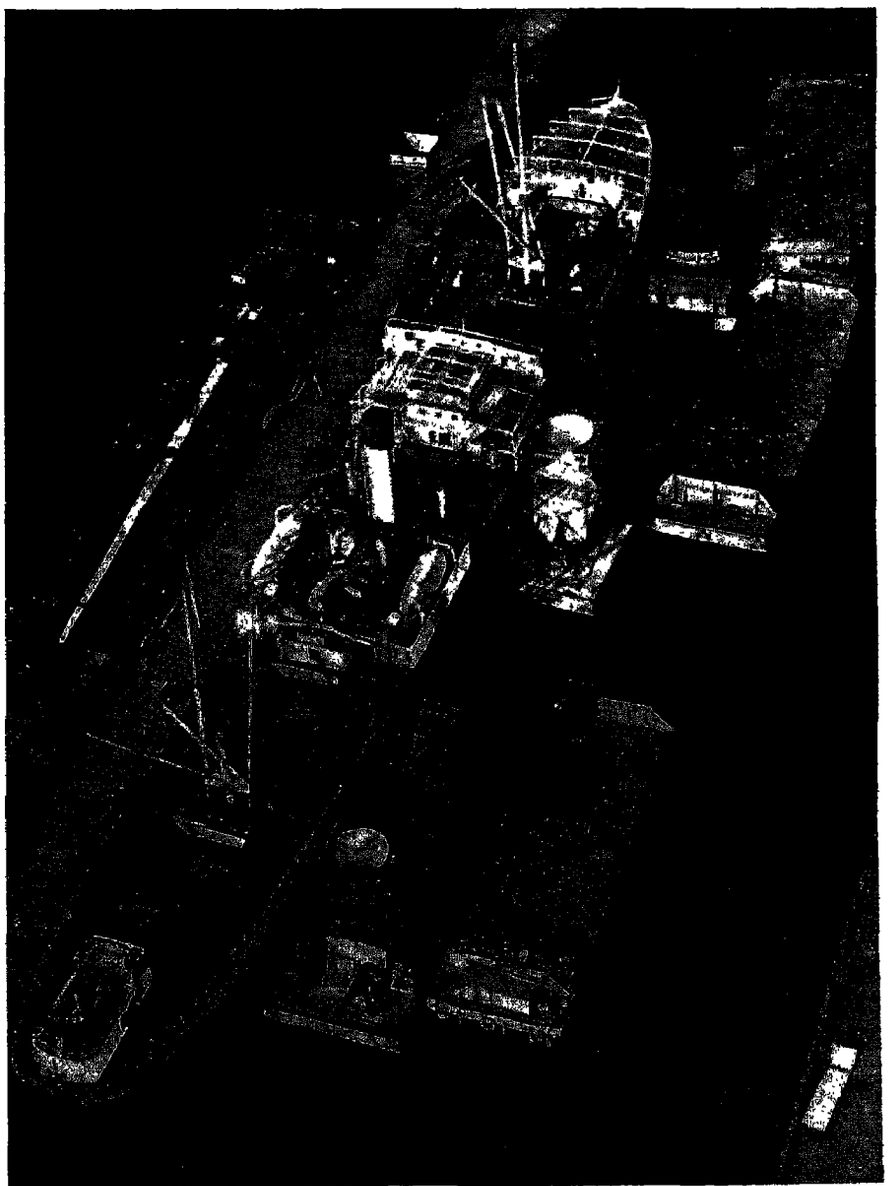
**Neutrality in Practice**

The strength of the American desire for technical neutrality, as a means of keeping out of the war while ensuring the victory of the Allies, can be gauged by the severity of the prohibition against the carrying of war supplies to belligerents by American ships. These vessels might go anywhere along American coasts, and to neutral ports, except those in Ireland, in Norway south of Bergen, in Sweden or any other Baltic ports, in Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands. Mostly the shipping between Canada and the United States remained as before. Black Sea and Mediterranean ports also remained open.

In spite of these exceptions, the Neutrality Bill struck a severe blow at American shipping and compelled an expansion of the mercantile marine of Britain and France. The Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Merchant Marine estimated on November 5 that the effects of the new restrictions involved the abandonment of eight foreign trade routes, in which the American Government had invested nearly two hundred million dollars, and the immediate withdrawal of 92 American vessels from the prohibited routes. About 6,000 seamen would be put out of employment, the cost of laying up the withdrawn vessels would amount to about four and a quarter million dollars a year, and the gross revenue lost to the American merchant marine would come to fifty-two and a half million dollars. While many business interests in the United States welcomed the revised Neutrality Law on business grounds, quite apart from political sentiments, it is not surprising that commercial circles, as distinct from industrial, were dismayed by the full consequences of the national policy. They had calculated on American shipping not being barred from any neutral ports, and no doubt expected that great quantities of supplies could be sent to Belgium and Holland at least. Some of the steamship lines worst hit by the new regulations announced their intention of chartering neutral vessels for the prohibited routes, and this would of course tend to increase the carrying resources of the Allies.

In actual terms of supplies, the repeal of the embargo meant the almost immediate superiority of the Allies over Germany.

Orders for aircraft and equipment alone were expected soon to reach a



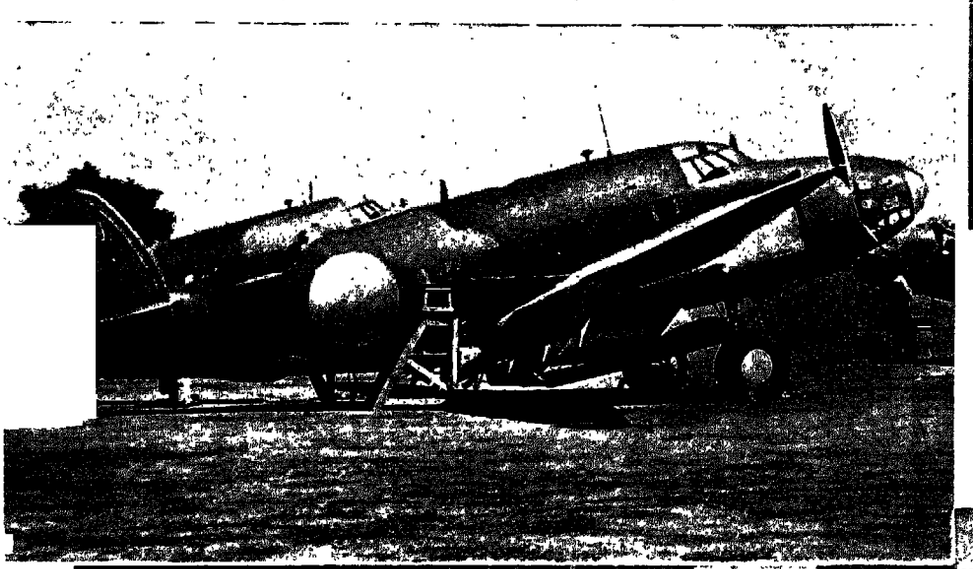
**AMERICA'S SCRAP-IRON FOR THE ALLIES**

With the lifting of the Arms Embargo, the United States metal industries worked at full pressure to fulfil orders received from the Allies. The ship seen here is loading scrap-iron for armament manufacture at Erie Basin, Brooklyn, New York.

*Photo, Fox*

value of some £250,000,000, though such estimates were necessarily guess-work. The definite facts of the situation in the first week of November, however, were sufficiently ill-omened for the Nazi tyranny. American aircraft industry, though only about one-third as large as the expanded British industry, was employing nearly 40,000 men and planning rapid expansion. The factories of southern California were already working above normal capacity and ready to turn out 700 war 'planes a month. The remaining 100 bombers out of 250 ordered previously by the British Government from the Lockheed factory, which had not been delivered when the embargo on arms was declared early in 1939, were expected to be ready in a few weeks. The British Government's $27,000,000 order to this factory had been supplemented by a $6,000,000 order on account of Australia. At both Los Angeles and New York shipment began of single-engined training 'planes completed by the North American

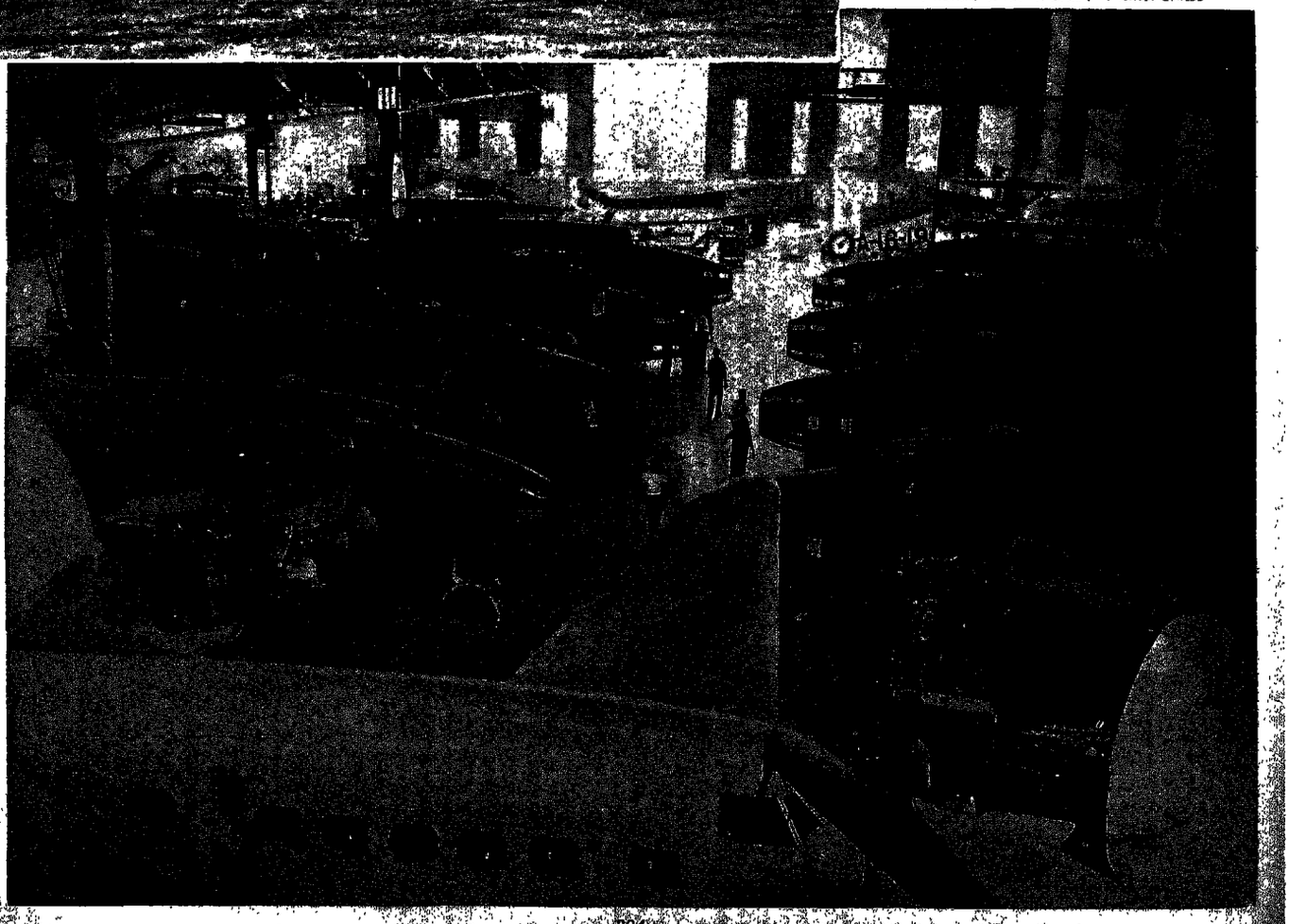


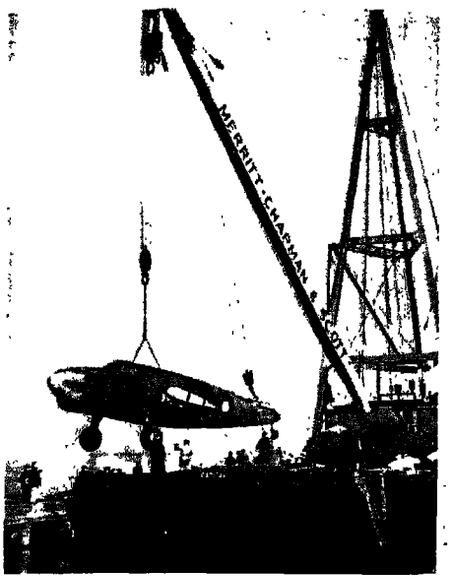


**AMERICAN 'PLANES FOR THE R.A.F.**

**In this page are seen the first two types of American military aircraft ordered by the R.A.F. Below, reconnaissance bombers are being turned out in a factory of the Lockheed Company. Left, Lockheed bombers at Burbank, California, ready for delivery. Note obscured R.A.F. markings on fuselage. Above, R.A.F. pilots returning after training on "Harvard" training 'planes, made by the North American Aviation Co.**

*Photos, Wide World; Planet News*






**SAFE ACROSS IN BRITISH SHIPS**

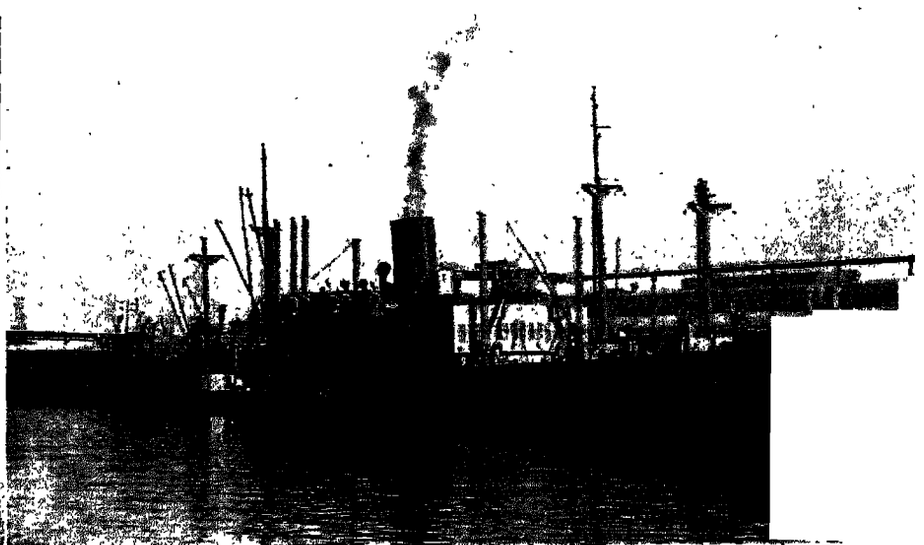
**Above, Lockheed bombers being loaded on to lighters at a U.S. air base for shipment to the Allies. Right, a British freighter arriving at San Pedro, California, to take aboard a cargo of bombers for England. Below, Lockheed "Hudsons" seen on an English quayside after being landed. By the terms of the United States Neutrality Act the 'planes must be paid for on delivery and may not be transported on American ships.**

***Photos, Wide World; Associated Press; Keystone***

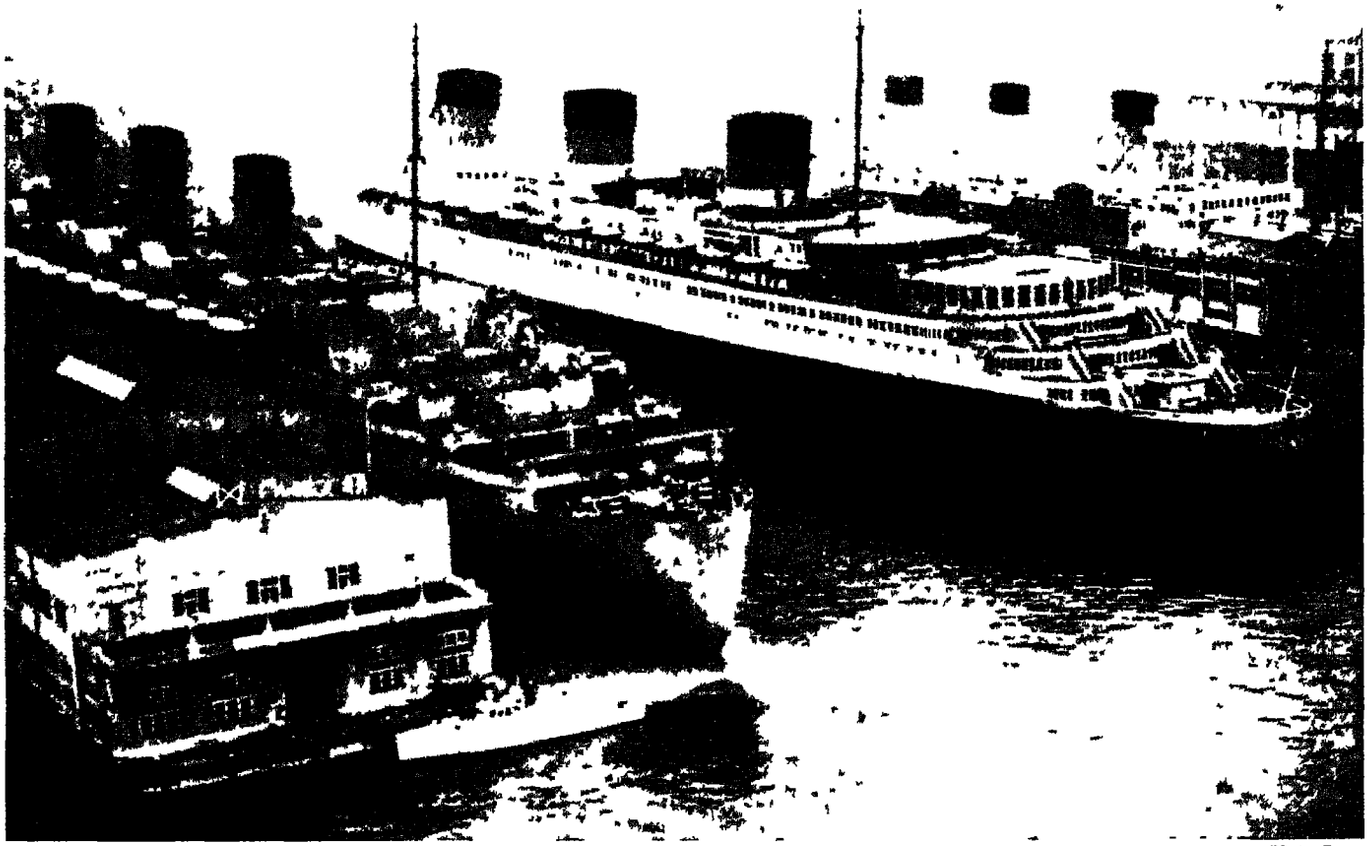
Aviation Company for Britain and France. The French Government had ordered 775 of these, and from the Douglas factory 700 two-engined bombers with a speed of 350 miles an hour.

On the day that the House of Representatives passed the Neutrality Bill British and French agents made provisional agreements that would come into force as soon as it was signed by the President (as it was the next day) for not less than £44,000,000 to be paid on account of 'planes and equipment. Full speed ahead was the order of the day also in many other American factories, to meet the Allies' needs for spare supplies of a variety of essentials, from tools, gun-steel and guns to motor vehicles and surgical equipment.

The enormous potential supplies of the United States promised to meet the Allied demands, while also supplying a new programme of American naval and air expansion which was announced on the day that President Roosevelt signed the new Neutrality Act. This involved







Photo, Fox

OCEAN GREYHOUNDS ON THE LEASH

The two greatest ocean liners, the "Queen Mary" (left) and the "Normandie," are here seen side by side at their New York piers, where they had to remain when war broke out. To keep these great vessels in idleness was a costly matter, including pier rent, wages and food for the skeleton crews and the cost of police guards. The monthly cost of maintaining the "Queen Mary" amounted to some £5,000.

the spending of an extra £260,000,000 on the navy, which would obtain 95 new warships, and constructing about 2,400 aircraft. Authority for this programme was to be sought in January, 1940, and meanwhile American industries would be busy on Allied orders.

The overwhelming advantage of the United States in producing the basic essentials for modern munitions was demonstrated by Dr. Fritz Sternberg's statistics in the "Manchester Guardian" of September 22, 1939. In the table reproduced here the figures displayed the capacity for rapid expansion shown by the U.S.A. during the war of 1914–18.

Since the iron and steel industry was the one of prime importance in the war, Dr. Sternberg gave the relevant figures for Germany and the United States immediately before 1939. In 1937 the United States produced 37,200,000 tons of pig-iron. In 1938, owing to severe depression, this total fell to 19,080,000 tons. But the German totals were 15,088,000 tons in 1937 and 18,506,000 in 1938, and Germany's industry was then working under pressure of the Nazi Government's plan for colossal armaments. Hence it is clear by these figures that the United States needed only to increase the production of 1938 to that achieved in 1937 in order to add to her output by as much as Germany's maximum. A similar moral was pointed by the figures for steel ingots. The total production in tons was 50,300,000 in 1937 by the United States and 20,280,000 by Germany. In 1938 the United States output was 28,290,000, and Germany's 23,330,000. The United States had no need to build any new blast furnaces in 1939–40 to increase her output by an amount equal to almost the entire German maximum.

Another factor of great importance to the new situation brought about by the repeal of the American Arms Embargo was that of reserves of labour. When the war began in Europe, the United States had some 10,000,000 unemployed, including much skilled labour.

PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY OF THE UNITED STATES

*Basic Essentials for Munitions*

| | (Million tons) 1913 | 1918 |
|---|---|---|
| **Coal Extraction:** | | |
| Great Britain | 202 | 231 |
| France | 41 | 26 |
| Germany | 190 | 161 |
| Total | 523 | 418 |
| United States | 517 | 615 |
| **Iron-Ore Extraction:** | | |
| Great Britain | 16 | 15 |
| France | 22 | 2 |
| Germany | 36 | 22 |
| Total | 74 | 39 |
| United States | 63 | 71 |
| **Pig-Iron Production:** | | |
| Great Britain | 10 | 9 |
| France | 5 | 1 |
| Germany | 19 | 12 |
| Total | 34 | 22 |
| United States | 31 | 40 |
| **Production of Steel Ingots:** | | |
| Great Britain | 8 | 10 |
| France | 5 | 2 |
| Germany | 17 | 12 |
| Total | 30 | 24 |
| United States | 32 | 45 |

*From the "Manchester Guardian," September 22, 1939*

Chapter 29

# BRITAIN'S EXPEDITIONARY FORCE STANDS TO ARMS ON THE WEST

*Digging In and Settling Down—Provisioning of the Army—Alert Readiness the Keynote—The Entente in Practical Operation—A Glimpse of the Maginot Fortifications—Patrol and Reconnaissance—The Fuehrer Sought in Vain a Way through the Barrier—A State of 'Uneasy Quiet'*

As October drew to a close, "General Winter" gave most convincing signs that he was about to assume command on the Western Front. Following forty-eight hours' unceasing rain, No-man's-land, already churned up by the fire of nine weeks of war, assumed the appearance and the character of a morass, and the Rhine inundated the positions in or near the river banks Fortunately for the Allies, the French roads are too solidly constructed to be affected by even the most prolonged downpour, and the stream of men and transport proceeding to the Front was unhindered by the turn for the worse in the weather

Correspondents who visited the British sector found the men's spirits totally unaffected by the prevailing dampness. Detachments were busily engaged in digging fresh trenches in the heavy clay, and deepening those already constructed. Others devoted their efforts to the still further extension of the great expanse of barbed wire which lay before and amongst the fortified posts. Day after day the work went on, and each day saw an ever more impassable obstacle erected to stay the advance of the enemy. So far not a shot had been fired on the British front save by the anti-aircraft gunners, but the soldiers, as they went whistling about their work in the rain, breathed confidence from every pore.

To some extent the mud made more difficult the work of bringing up the big guns into the advanced zone, but the tractors and lorries used to draw the heavy artillery successfully overcame that element which so often and so calamitously affected the course of the last war Great numbers of guns of all calibres were placed in position—how many no one could guess, so careful, so elaborate, was the camouflage. Hidden in barns and haystacks, in villages and clumps of trees, in embankments and sometimes in the apparently defenceless open, guns bristled the whole length of the British front and far behind. Covered with nets—said to have been worked by the skilful fingers of Scottish fisher-girls—or with boughs and greenery, they pointed their muzzles menacingly towards the east. Until they began to speak, however, the life of the French countryside went on practically unchanged about the gun positions. Children played with the gunners, and the village chickens pecked unconcernedly amongst the monstrous wheels Those who had shared in the experiences of the Great War of twenty years before were quick to appreciate the contrast between this struggle and its predecessor. Then they stood-to at dawn in an exposed trench, and spent their days and nights in the midst of mud and indescribable nastiness. Never

**Mud Defeated by Tractors**

DAMP BUT NOT DOWNHEARTED

**The autumn rains made large-scale operations on the Western Front impossible, but did not succeed in damping the spirits of the British soldiers, some of whom are seen below marching through a French village in their waterproof capes, watched with interest by a French labourer.**

*British Official Photograph Crown copyright*





## REMINDERS OF WAR IN A PEACEFUL SETTING

Peace and war are strangely intermingled in the photograph above, depicting a farmhouse in France where British troops were quartered and where the stacked shells bring a grim reminder of war into the peaceful farmyard atmosphere Below a working-party of men of a Scottish regiment are marching over a duckboard in the muddy fields of a French farm on their way to do some digging

*British Official Photographs Crown copyright*





C.-IN-C. ON A TOUR OF INSPECTION

General Viscount Gort, the British Commander-in-Chief, believes in frequent contact with the men in the field, and in the above photograph he is seen watching Scottish troops "digging in" and filling sandbags somewhere in the British sector

*British Official Photograph Crown copyright*

a moment when death might not strike with a sniper's bullet, a raider's hand grenade, or a shrapnel burst Often, too—at least in the earlier phase—the material wherewith to fight was inadequate But in the autumn of 1939, quite apart from the fact that the war had not started so far as actual fighting on the British front was concerned, the troops, after a spell of duty in the front line, were able to withdraw to warm and comfortable billets, and their general condition and treatment were far, far better than was that of the "Old Contemptibles."

**A Tommy's Day**

"The British soldier today" (wrote Mr. Douglas Williams in "The Daily Telegraph"), "as I have been able personally to observe, is better fed, better clothed and treated than any other soldier in the world He has three or even four good meals a day Breakfast, a hearty dinner, tea and, if the quartermaster of his unit knows his business, something tasty for supper in the evening He gets fresh meat every day brought up to railheads in refrigerator cars, bully beef only every now and then as a change of diet, fish in the shape of sardines or herrings frequently, and all the bread, tea, sugar, butter in reason, cheese, jam and vegetables he can eat. In short, he enjoys a well-balanced diet medically selected, which . . . is immensely superior to that available to many hundreds of thousands of people at home."

No layman can ever properly appreciate the vast task, the intricate organization, involved in the provisioning of the new British Expeditionary Force—the largest army, be it remembered, which has ever crossed the sea as a complete whole Two army corps went to France, and the motor transport attached to an army corps would occupy forty miles of road 'Every day," to quote Mr Williams again, "nearly 200,000 men have to be fed and 650 tons of petrol supplied to keep the mechanical transport running The monthly requirements in weight to supply the army in the field with everything it needs amount to one third of a ton per man, excluding such items as heavy railways or bridge equipment Food, ammunition and clothing are the main items, but scores of other things complete a list that would bewilder the largest department store in London or New York In addition to all these, large reserve stores have to be built up at base supply depots to ensure supplies against the risk of air raids on home ports, on bases across the Channel, or on strategic railway centres in France which might momentarily handicap or delay the normal movement of material from the bases to the troops in the front sector." Within a month of the Field Force's arrival in France forty-six days' reserves of food and immense stocks of ammunition had been built up. Nothing that the keenest brains could think of as being necessary to a modern army was omitted

Here, indeed, is contrast enough between 1939 and 1914, but yet another marked change for the better was seen in what was described as the new spirit of camaraderie between officers and men There may have been a touch of military Prussianism in the old-time Regular Army, but that of today is markedly democratic, and the barrier between the ranks is only such as is required by good discipline The Commander-in-Chief himself set an example *of cheery good comradeship He might* be seen in the front trenches, standing in mud up to his ankles as he chatted with the soldiers on duty or poked knowingly at the sandbags and wire Anywhere and everywhere General Lord Gort's sturdy figure, the khaki uniform set off by the red tabs and hat and imposing rows of medal ribbons, might be encountered.

Under his experienced eye the preparations for the offensive which must come some time and might come at any time, went on apace The units as they arrived from the ports of disembarkation took up their positions and, as Brit[illegible] soldiers will, soon made th[illegible] really at home in th[illegible] ings. They [illegible]

corrugated iron, pit props, tree trunks, boughs and boards, and displayed the most original gifts in the perfecting of their camouflage.

Always the men were on the alert. In the gun-pits and in the trenches held by the infantry, in the machine-gun emplacements and the tank fields, they maintained the utmost vigilance. Fingers were ever, as it were, on the trigger; hands were always ready to fire the guns. So dilatory was the war that there were many grumbles at the enemy's inactivity. Only the anti-aircraft gunners could boast of having actually fired a few shots in anger, as the saying goes. Once or twice Nazi 'planes came within range and the guns were let fire. There were some casualties, even—in the target, none amongst the defenders.

Such exciting occasions were considered to be all too few and far between, however. For most of the time the observers turned their glasses on the sky in a vain quest. Every half-hour a relief took over to maintain the ceaseless vigil. Very, very rarely did he find cause to blow that whistle which brought the gun crews rushing to their station, which lifted the muzzles of the guns and swung them easily this way and that as they followed the darting, speeding movements of the 'plane in the sky.

**'All-Quiet'**

Perhaps even more suggestive of the readiness of the British Field Force to meet the attack when Hitler should deem fit to launch his oft-threatened onslaught were the elaborate provisions for the reception and care of the wounded. Casualty clearing stations were established near the front and equipped with all the latest life-saving apparatus. As yet no pitiful procession of bullet- and shell-shattered humanity passed the portals of these temples of mercy, but all the same the doctors and nurses who staffed them found many an opportunity of exercising their healing art. Soldiers in the line are not immune from sickness and accident, and many life-saving operations were performed in a room which only a few weeks before had been the parlour of a French bourgeois, but was now a fully-equipped operating theatre.

Relations between the British and the French troops and, what was not always the case in 1914, between the High Command, were excellent. The Entente Cordiale of the last war was once again very much in evidence. The Tommy and the poilu conversed in that strange mixture of signs and sounds that served their fathers so well in 1914–1918, and on the football field they met often in friendly rivalry. Rather to the surprise of the British, the French were not seldom the victors; the supporters of Villa and Arsenal forgot that the present generation of young Frenchmen has found in the British sportsman a type worthy of the sincerest form of flattery.

There was little to mark the point where the British line ended and the French began. Mr. Douglas Williams went to discover it one day. "I stood on the grass-covered roof of the block-house," he told readers of "The Daily Telegraph," "and looked across the marshy plains, humped with machine-gun nests, dimpled with barbed wire, and criss-crossed with trenches and tank traps. The rain was still falling in torrents and water lay inches deep on the fields and lanes. Here and there working parties shrouded in mackintosh sheets were improving strong points or cutting branches off willow trees to use

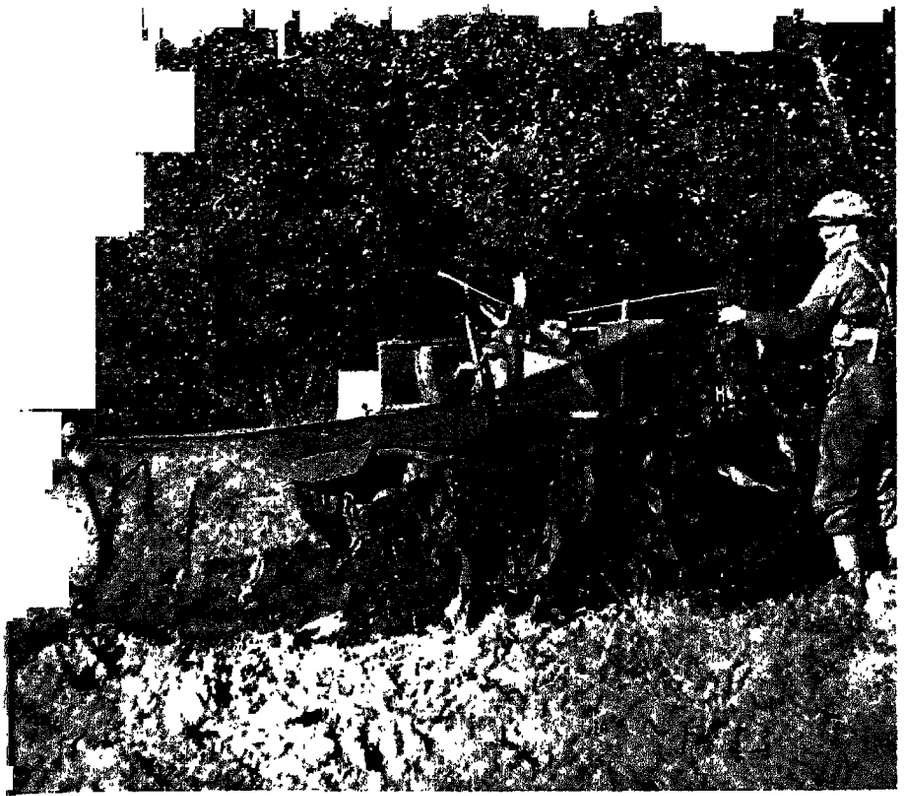




**FRIENDS AS WELL AS ALLIES**

In the top photograph soldiers of the B.E.F. are being entertained to tea by a French family. The lower picture shows a corporal of the R.A.F. being presented with a bouquet by a French soldier after an impromptu football match between French soldiers and R.A.F. boys, won by the British team.

*Photos, courtesy of the French Embassy; G.P.U.*

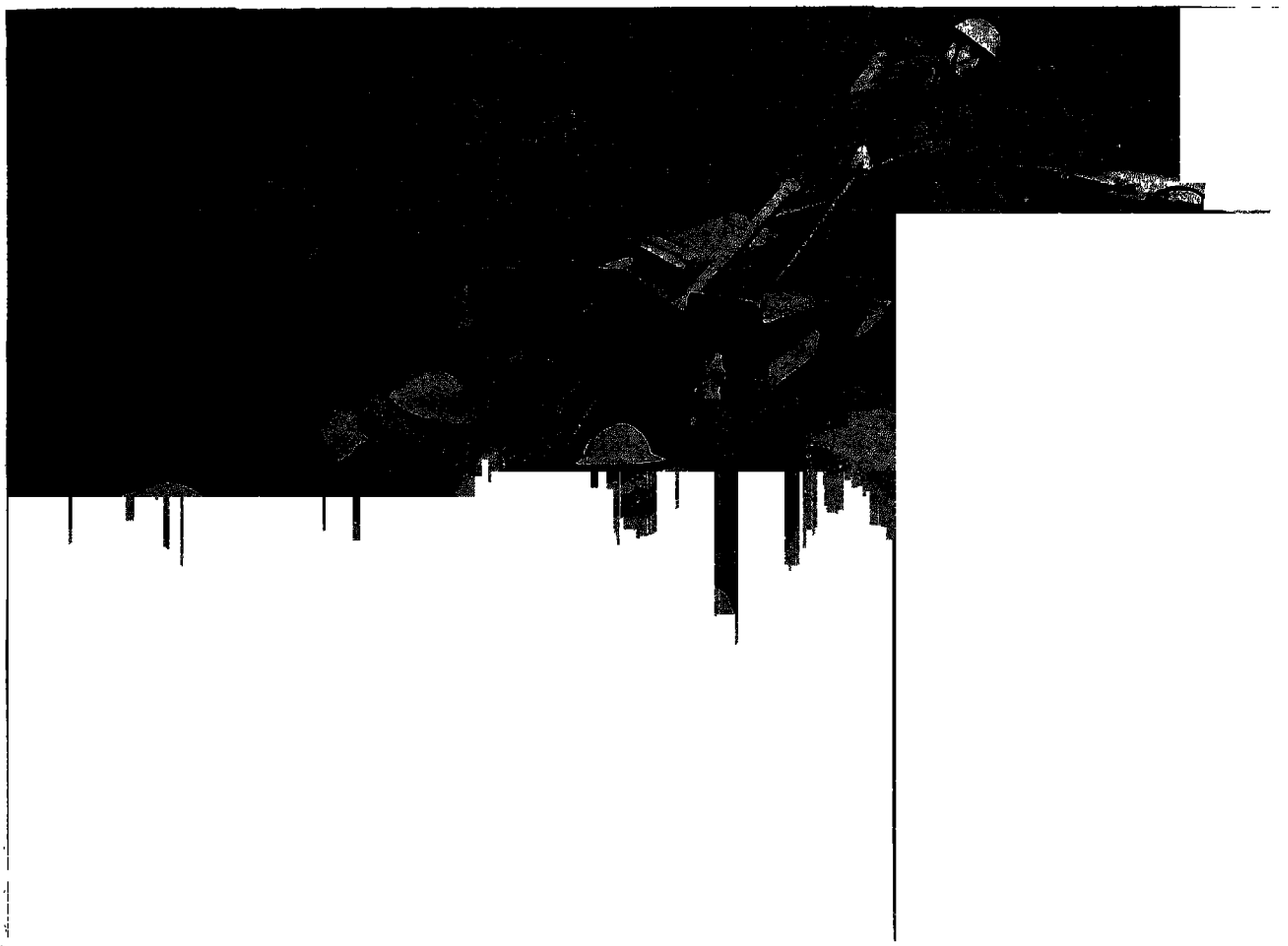




## BRITISH TROOPS ACTIVE IN FRANCE

**Fishermen's wives were busy making nets for the British Army, and above is seen what they were wanted for. With coloured material fastened to them they provide camouflage for guns, in this instance a Bren gun. On the right a signaller is at work in the British zone in France. Below, an anti-tank gun is being hoisted on to a transport truck**

*British Official Photographs: Crown copyright*





OUTWORK OF THE MAGINOT LINE

Above is a fortified work, one of the many linked fortresses which extend along the famous Maginot Line In the distance can be seen the iron stakes known as " asperges " (asparagus), designed to rip the caterpillar tracks off attacking tanks. In the foreground are barbed wire entanglements.

*Photo, Planet News*

in revetments. ' That is where the French line begins,' said the officer of a famous Scottish battalion which holds one of the extreme flank wings of the British sector. And he pointed across the field to another pill box, similar to the one on which I was standing, where I could distinguish French poilus gathered around the doorway of their concrete fort. The position appeared a very strong one. Here and there were scattered individual mitrailleuse posts, each protected by an armoured cupola, fitted with a telescope, inside which the gunner can sit and fire in perfect safety. It looked as though we had all the benefit of the lie of the ground, and any enemy forces advancing would be exposed to a withering and destructive fire long before they reached close quarters. At a farm near by, where we adjourned after our tour, it was curious to hear the combined chatter of French mixed with broad Scots. French privates stood amid the kitchens and tins smoking their pipes and talking as best they could in a kind of new-fangled argot with the Scottish soldiers, their kilts, unfortunately, abandoned in favour of battle dress, but still retaining a hint of Scotland in their bonnets." Co-operation was excellent, he found, and there was much fraternizing among both officers and men of the two armies.

A companion picture was given to the same journal by its Correspondent with the French Army. " A giant is stirring uneasily," wrote Mr. Richard Capell, " but the war here is still not really awake. He groans in his sleep sometimes, but we can only guess when he will rouse himself. It is like early morning in some enormous palace—a tyrant's palace. The master of the household is not up, but there is tremendous activity among the innumerable servants. Privileged onlookers have been allowed to see the preparations for the day's work. They have been welcomed and shown without reserve all kinds of marvels, dreadful marvels, now in readiness for the entertainment of the risen giant. Never before was there anything of the sort so elaborately prepared." There was nothing on the surface, went on Mr. Capell. " The eastern frontier of France will in 1,000 years or so have nothing to show to remind posterity of the year 1939 comparable with Hadrian's Wall or Offa's Dyke. The Great Wall of China has not been rivalled as a picturesque spectacle by the Maginot Line. The new wonder of the world is indeed characterized by its modest inconspicuousness. Here and there is a mushroom — so called—of concrete and steel, but there is hardly anything else to catch the eye of the casual passer-by—if one can possibly imagine a casual passer-by in these parts. But, underground, French ingenuity has elaborated a new world, something between the London tube system and a battleship." Throughout his visit Mr. Capell found it difficult to believe that he was not on board a battle-cruiser of some strange navy whose personnel wore khaki. He mentioned this to a young French gunner in one of the many turrets. " Yes," came the reply, " but a real ship would sometimes put into port."

**Invisible Fortress**

" Above ground," continued Mr. Capell, " there is a world to all appearance placid. On most days the sound of a shell is a rarity. Cows are grazing between the belts of wire. We come across a young gunner who has in a leisure hour snared a hare. A very few miles away there is a ridge, and you are told that the Germans are there. ' Let them come,' says the commandant. The whole garrison is on tiptoe. It is magnificently confident in itself and its marvellous machine. It knows itself impregnable."

To the co-operation of French and British the Prime Minister paid tribute. Speaking on October 18, he stated that the British Expeditionary Force had now finally taken over its allotted sector of the French line and all the divisions were in position. " We are proud to know," he went on, " that our men are thus standing to arms beside the soldiers of France, for whose patriotism, determination, and magnificent fighting qualities we have so deep an admiration. The understanding between the French and British Higher Command is complete. The fact that our Expeditionary Force is under the command of the French Commander-in-Chief and that unity of command has thus been achieved at so early a stage of the war is one proof of this accord. Another is to be found in an agreement by which French troops are serving under the orders of the British Commander-in-Chief in France." Thus the Premier made it plain that in this war, unlike the last, there was to be none of that frittering away of effort, nor of that weakening







## SIEGFRIED LINE AS THE GERMANS SEE IT

This page shows the German army on active service on the Western Front. Above, a sentry, outside a fortified work, is watching for signs of enemy movement ; top right, German soldiers manning an anti-tank gun ; right, a German machine-gun emplacement on the Siegfried Line ; below, a German patrol advancing to attack a French outpost.

*Photos, International Graphic Press, E.N.A*



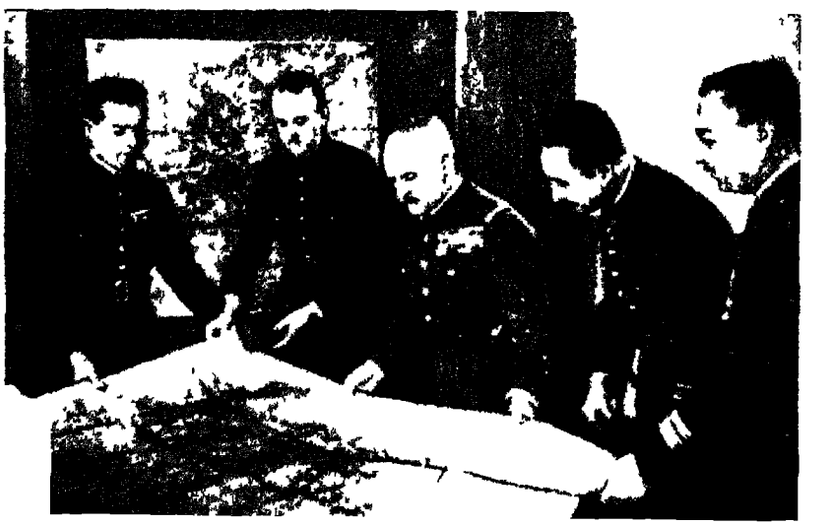




## FACETS OF WAR AT A FRENCH H.Q.

Above, a German prisoner, captured during operations on the Western Front, is being interrogated by the Intelligence Branch Left, staff officers at work in a room hung with military maps. Lower left a French general studying a map with his staff officers. Below, a scene in the Air Liaison department Captured swastika pennants are hanging over the map by the window, and captured trophies, including an automatic rifle, lie on the table at the left.

*Photos, courtesy of the French Embassy; Planet News; Associated Press*





and short-sighted prejudice that for so long prevented the establishment of a unified command.

Turning now to the record of the days and weeks following the masterly withdrawal of the French advanced troops to their lines of resistance on the frontier (*see* Chapter 18, page 170), we are confronted by a series of uninformative bulletins, uninformative because the real war had not yet started and such fighting as there was was a matter of outposts and patrols, and artillery duels at long range. "Patrol and reconnaissance activity between the Moselle and the Saar. We took a few prisoners." "All quiet during the night. Rainy weather. Patrol activity on both sides on many parts of the front." Thus, the official announcements by the French H.Q. on October 21. From Berlin on the same day came: "On the conclusion of operations south-east of Saarbruecken quiet has set in again on the Western Front. Nothing has occurred except local artillery and patrol activities on both sides." While on the ground local incidents continued to be the order of the day, there was, however, considerable activity in the air, despite the clouds and heavy rain, which on many days made aerial reconnaissances out of the question.

Across the Rhine much more activity was in evidence, though what it portended none could say with any degree of certainty. From all quarters came reports of the massing of the Nazi hosts behind the Siegfried Line; a million and a half men were believed to be in position on the western frontiers of the Reich. Herr Hitler himself paid a brief visit to the front for the purpose, no doubt, of acquainting himself with the actual position and discussing with his generals the way in which the period of inactivity—so deadly to Nazi hopes of a struggle that was short and sharp—might be brought to a speedy close.

**Fuehrer at the Front**

Towards the end of October the Fuehrer was said to have made his headquarters at Godesberg, and his presence in the Rhineland watering-place suggested that he might be contemplating launching the attack against the Belgian frontier a hundred miles away, but the weather was so wretched that it must have been obvious even to him that in such conditions an offensive would be foredoomed to failure.

First the rain, then the floods. All the tributaries of the Rhine and Moselle overflowed their banks; even the bridges on some of the rivers were under water. Many of the villages which for a brief period were in French occupation but had been recovered by the Germans when the French retired in mid-October, were now waterlogged, and a number of the gun casemates were rendered untenable by the rising Rhine. Even in the main defences of the Siegfried Line conditions were far from pleasant: the oft-heard rumours of its poor construction were repeated, and from neutral sources came reports of the Nazi troops shivering in the cold and damp.

Now the would-be Napoleon of the twentieth century turned his eyes on



**DALADIER'S GREETINGS**

**M. Edouard Daladier, the French Premier, kept in constant touch with his country's fighting forces, and in the photograph above, taken during a visit to the front, he is seen shaking hands with a leader of the French Air Force.**

***Photo, courtesy of the French Embassy***

Switzerland—and without a tremor the Swiss manned their frontier posts in full strength. He turned towards Holland—and the Dutch raised the level of their dikes and kept their army in a state of instant readiness. Belgium, when the Fuehrer looked menacingly in her direction, let it be known through the mouth of her Sovereign that she was stronger far than in 1914, and would resist to the uttermost any assault on her territory. Hitler mustered his legions on the North Sea coast of Germany, and it was said that he was planning an invasion of England—or perhaps a series of large-scale air raids, in which a prominent part would be played by a host of parachutists who, descending on the quiet countryside of East Anglia, would establish themselves in the heart of the enemy's country and disorganize her people's life. This interesting manœuvre duly impressed the neutral minds for whom it was intended—until a little exercise in mental arithmetic revealed that even if 200 'planes were to succeed in dropping on England 20 soldiers apiece, the Home Command would have a mere handful of 4,000 men to tackle. Where, then, should the great stroke be delivered—that stroke which should inaugurate the "Blitzkrieg" on the west?

**Threats Only**

We may suppose the nonplussed Fuehrer returning to what was probably his original scheme, of attacking the Maginot Line in force. Second thoughts, however, cannot have been any more encouraging than the first. An assault on the Maginot Line, Colonel Fabry, a former military secretary to Marshal Joffre and a distinguished soldier in the war of 1914–1918, wrote in the "Matin," would be an operation which would repeat "on an immense scale the eternal problem of all sieges—to crush the garrison, including the field forces in advance of the Maginot Line, with a torrent of fire and steel, simultaneously to cut off all help from outside, and to take it by famine, in this case a famine of reinforcements and munitions." In the light of the universally acknowledged immense strength of the French fortified zone and the vast number of highly trained men ready to defend it, an assault could not be anything but an exceedingly costly operation and one whose result must be, to say the least, doubtful.

So for the time being the condition of uneasy quiet was maintained on the Western Front. In Paris and in London there were some who grumbled at the "slowness" of the war. They had hoped to read of something more exciting than the monotonous recital of quiet nights and empty days. But, as Major-General Sir Ernest Swinton said in the first of a series of weekly broadcast talks on the progress of the war, "The war is not being run to provide news. And when I hear people complaining about the lack of news from France and talking about 'All quiet on the Western Front,' I say, 'Thank God that there *is* no news of battles; thank God that the commanders have learned something from 1914–1918, and that the Allied troops are not going to be thrown in haste, without due preparation, against a stone wall or, rather, a steel and concrete maze, bristling with every sort of gun.'"

Chapter 30

# ECONOMIC WARFARE: A REVIEW OF THE FIRST TWO MONTHS OF WAR

*A Vital Offensive Arm—The Ministry of Economic Warfare—Contraband of War—The Control Service at Work—Enormous Quantities of Enemy Goods Intercepted—Foodstuffs Convertible into Munitions—The German Attack on Neutrals—Losses and Gains in the First Two Months*

For the most part the wars of the past have been won on the battlefield, where armies fought fiercely for victory, or on the sea, where navies engaged in a similarly martial struggle. Still today the armies and the navies hold the stage, and we have now to chronicle a war in which the conflict has been carried high up above the clouds. But there is in modern warfare an element which, if not entirely lacking in the wars of olden days, was at least decidedly subordinate to the military and hardly noticed—the economic. In the war of 1939—as, indeed, in that of 1914–18—economic warfare stood forth as a vital offensive arm, a complementary fourth to the historic three services of Army, Navy and Air Force.

Within a few hours of war being declared, Britain's Ministry of Economic Warfare was set up under Mr. Ronald Hibbert Cross, M.P., a merchant banker who was elected to the House of Commons in 1931 as a Conservative, and when the war began was Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade.

**Blockade Ministry**

Corresponding broadly to the Ministry of Blockade which functioned so successfully in the war of 1914–18, the new Ministry's aim is in all essentials the same—so to disorganize the economy of the enemy as to prevent him from effectively carrying on the war, and at the same time to initiate and co-ordinate the economic, financial and industrial aspects of Britain's own life. Although it came into being only on September 3, 1939, the plans for the Ministry had been taking shape for some two years beforehand, and a staff of Civil Servants and of expert business men and industrialists had been earmarked for service. It commenced operations at once, then, as a going concern. The first shot in the economic war was fired on September 4, when the King issued a proclamation giving a list of articles which were declared to be "contraband of war," and forbidden to be imported into Germany.

No blockade of Germany was declared, although the term is often used as a convenient one for describing economic warfare based on the exercise of belligerent rights at sea. Correctly speaking, blockading in the naval sense is the control of an enemy port, or series of ports and coastline, so that not only may none of the enemy ships enter or leave, but also, no neutral ships may have intercourse with the blockaded area. Napoleon in 1806 declared by his Berlin Decree that the British Isles were in a state of blockade, but he had not the naval power whereby the decree could be made effective. In the Great War of 1914–18 the German Admiralty proclaimed the blockade of the British Isles when the first submarine campaign opened early in February, 1915, and in the following month Britain replied by declaring Germany to be in a state of blockade. In the end it was the blockade as much as military pressure that brought the Kaiser's empire crashing to the ground in ruin.

In 1939 it was considered sufficient to institute a system of contraband control



DIRECTOR OF BLOCKADE

Here is the man whose job was to deprive Germany of the sinews of war—Mr. R. H. Cross, M.P., a merchant banker, who held the post of Minister of Economic Warfare.

*Photo, Planet News*

in which the traditional distinction between absolute and conditional contraband was maintained. The full list, which may be said to include anything designed to be used by the enemy for carrying on the war, was as follows:

*Absolute Contraband.* (a) All kinds of arms, ammunition explosives, chemicals, or appliances suitable for use in chemical warfare and machines for their manufacture or repair; component parts thereof; articles necessary or convenient for their use; materials or ingredients used in their manufacture; articles necessary or convenient for the production or use of such materials or ingredients.

(b) Fuel of all kinds; all contrivances for, or means of, transportation on land, in the water or air, and machines used in their manufacture or repair; component parts thereof; instruments, articles, or animals necessary or convenient for their use; materials or ingredients used in their manufacture; articles necessary or convenient for the production or use of such materials or ingredients.

(c) All means of communication tools, implements, instruments equipment, maps, pictures, papers, and other articles, machines, or documents necessary or convenient for carrying on hostile operations; articles necessary or convenient for their manufacture or use.

(d) Coin, bullion, currency, evidences of debt; also metal materials, dies, plates, machinery, or other articles necessary or convenient for their manufacture.

*Conditional Contraband.* (e) All kinds of food, foodstuffs, feed, forage and clothing and articles and materials used in their production.

**Contraband Controls**

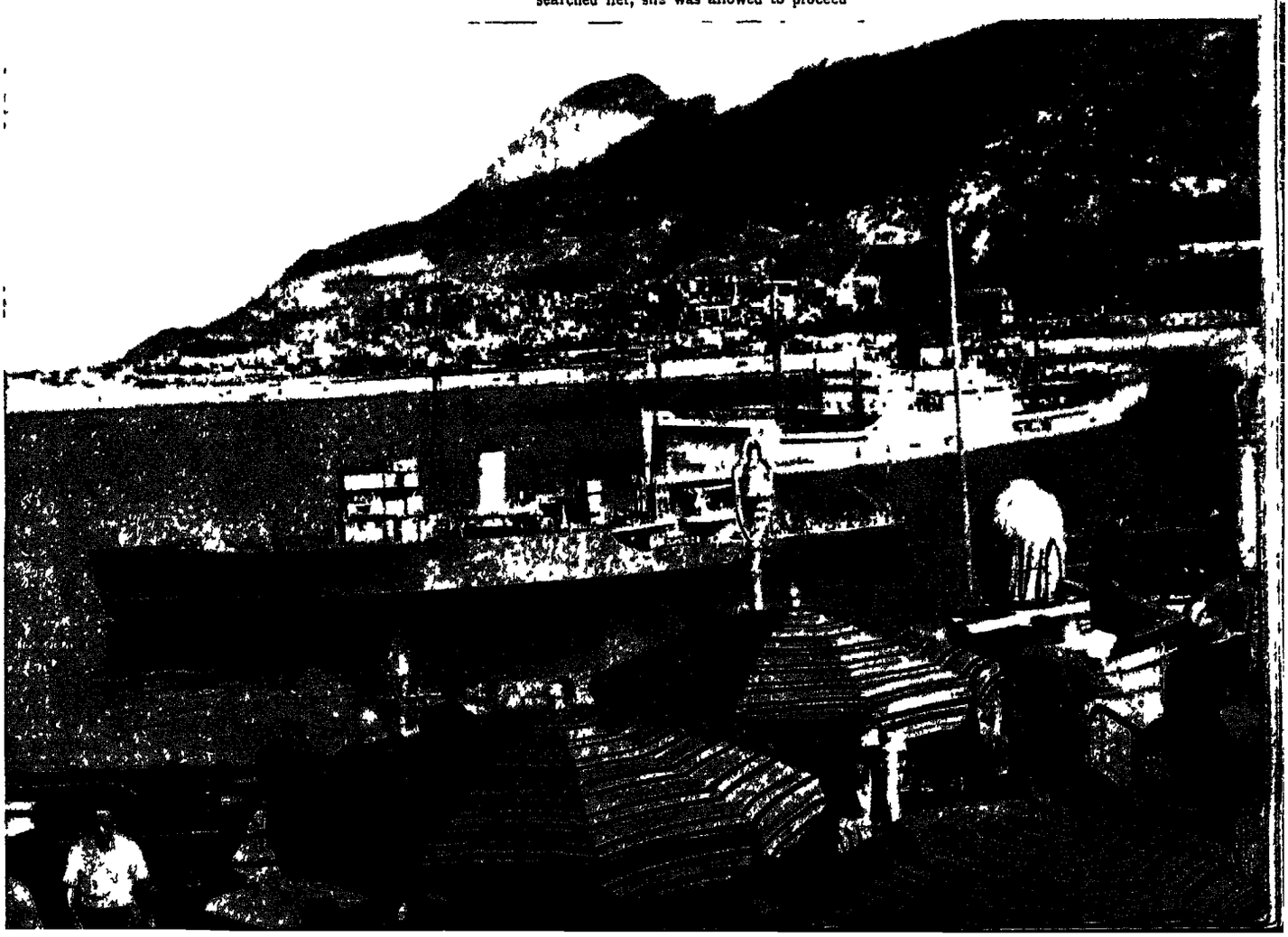
With a view to ensuring that no vessels should be allowed to proceed with contraband cargo having either immediately or ultimately an enemy destination, the Government established three contraband control bases in British waters—at Kirkwall in the Orkneys, the Downs off Ramsgate, and at Weymouth—and also at Gibraltar at one end of the Mediterranean and Haifa at the other. Vessels bound for enemy territory, or for ports in neutral countries from which goods could conveniently be forwarded to enemy territory, were advised to call voluntarily at one of the control bases in the United Kingdom, preferably at Weymouth. If they did so and it was established that they carried no contraband, they would be given a pass to facilitate their onward journey. Vessels



*Photos, Keystone, Associated Press*

## GLIMPSES OF THE BRITISH BLOCKADE

Here are further illustrations of the work of the British Contraband Control. Above, the skipper of a patrol vessel is shouting instructions to a neutral ship Below is a photograph taken from the deck of the crack Italian liner "Rex" as she was stopped by a British warship at the control base at Gibraltar After a boarding party had searched her, she was allowed to proceed



which did not call voluntarily would be liable to be diverted to a base, in those cases where adequate search at sea was not practicable.

It was declared that everything would be done to examine vessels as rapidly as possible, particularly those which called voluntarily, and neutral vessels were advised that delay would be reduced to a minimum if they would co-operate by having all their papers drawn up in the most convenient form and would carry a spare copy of the full ship's manifest to be handed over and retained by the examining officer.

**Method of Search**

Notice was also given that vessels calling at British ports, other than the three bases, in the ordinary course of trade would be required to give the Customs full particulars of their cargo, whether it was being landed or remaining on board.

On the whole, the neutrals co-operated willingly enough in the contraband control. The procedure was simple. We may suppose a neutral merchant vessel steaming up-Channel with a cargo for the Continent. Arrived off Weymouth, she anchors in the bay and hoists to the masthead a red and white blue-bordered flag, the indication that she is awaiting examination by the officers of the British Contraband Control, and the flag must not be lowered until clearance papers have been granted. By the time she has dropped anchor her approach has been signalled from Portland, and a boarding-party of two officers and six men of the Royal Navy sets out in a fishing drifter to board her. With some apologies to the captain for the delay and inconvenience, the boarding officer asks him to produce the ship's papers, manifest, bills of lading and other documents. While this is being done the wireless cabin is sealed up, so that no signals may be sent out while the ship is in the control zone.

After satisfying themselves that the ship's cargo is what its papers say it is —this may involve considerable prodding and unbaling in the hold—the boarding-party goes ashore, and a summary of the manifest, giving particulars of the cargo, passengers carried, ports of origin and destination, and so on, is sent by teleprinter to the Ministry of Economic Warfare in Aldwych, London. Usually the Ministry's consent to the release of the ship is received in a few hours. The boarding-party assembles again, sails out to the ship and returns the papers to her captain, together with a certificate of naval clearance. If, however, the boarding-party finds something just a trifle suspicious, a search-party is sent out to make a thorough examination of the whole cargo, and an order may be given for the vessel to be unloaded. A full statement of the evidence will also be prepared by the Ministry and submitted for decision to a specially formed Contraband Committee, under the chairmanship of Lord Finlay, whose decision will be given in each case on the basis of the evidence. Cargoes will either be released, detained for further inquiries, or seized; and the vessel, unless she has also rendered herself liable to seizure, will be allowed to proceed with her voyage. If the decision is seizure, vessels or goods are transferred to the Admiralty Marshal, who then becomes answerable for their custody until the case can be brought before the Prize Court.

**The Legal Process**

In the first six weeks of war the daily average of neutral ships arriving in Weymouth Bay for examination was twenty. Most of these were allowed to pass after a brief inspection of their papers, but out of a total of 74 vessels (carrying 513,000 tons of cargo) 99,300

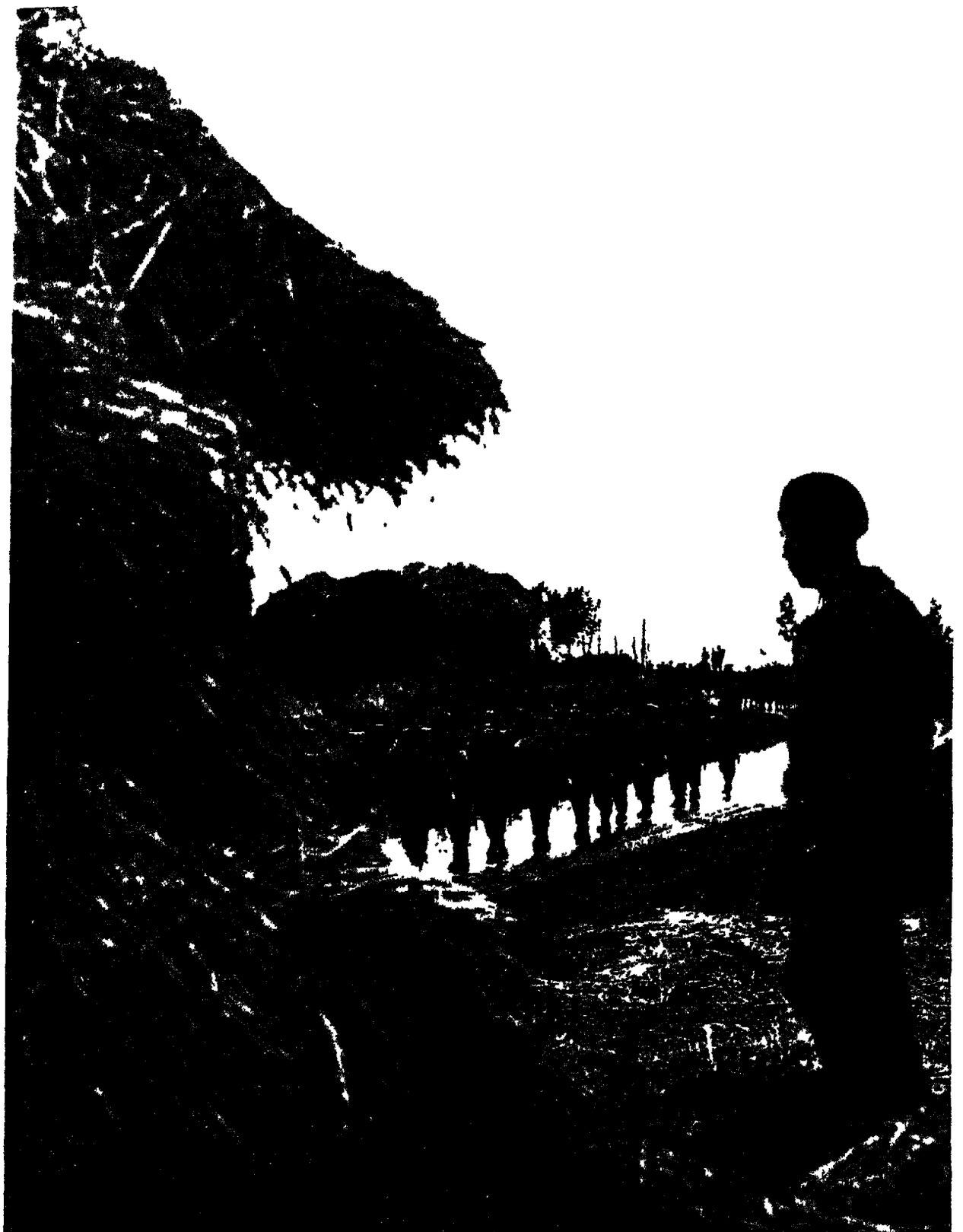




**HOW NEUTRAL SHIPS ARE SEARCHED FOR CONTRABAND**

**At the outbreak of war Britain instituted a system of contraband control, and a number of control bases were established. The photographs show, above, a search-party examining grain on a neutral vessel; and, top, a boarding officer (centre) going over the ship's books and examining manifests.**

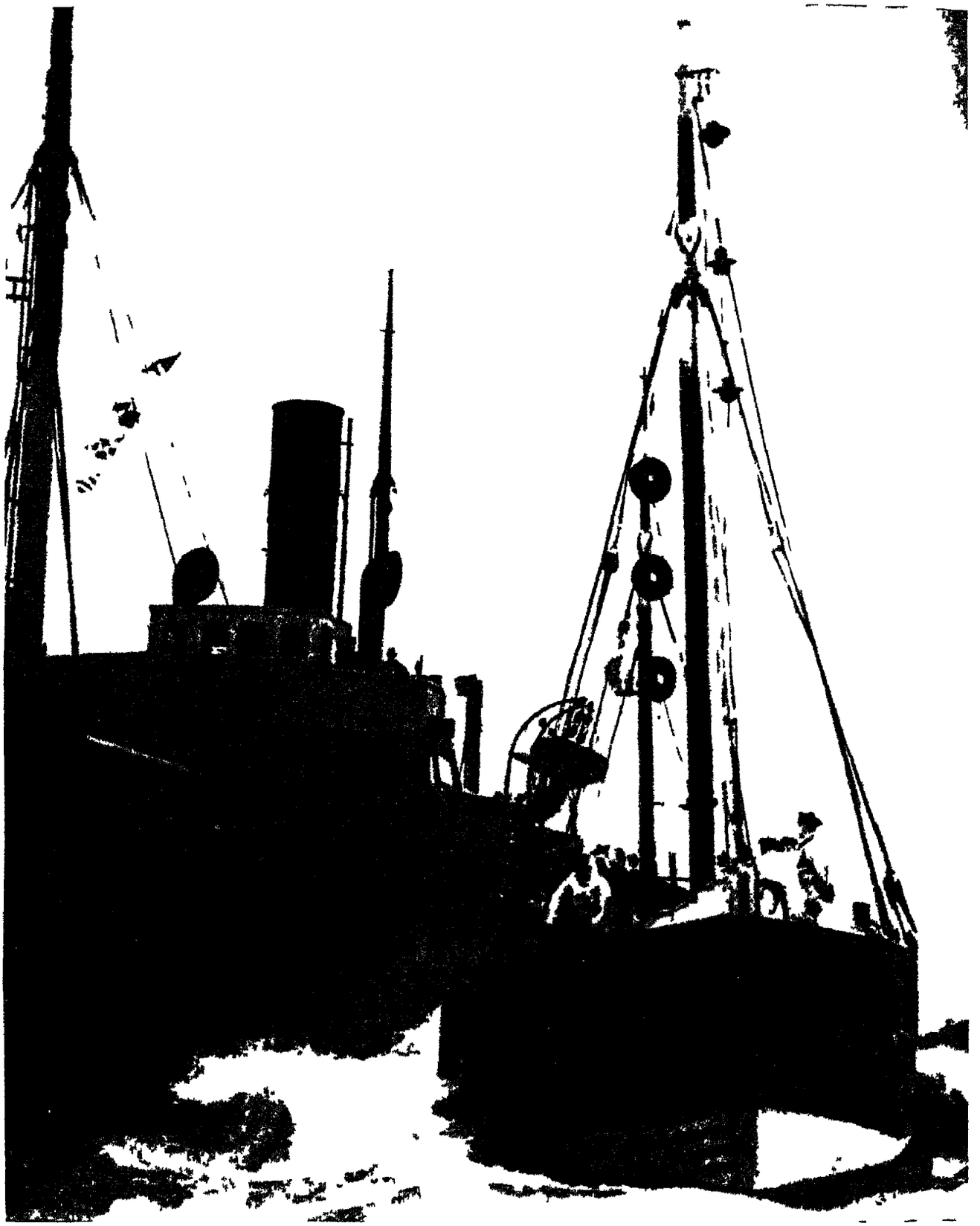
*Photos, Keystone*



BRITAIN STEPS OUT ALONG A FRENCH ROAD

The Nazi sneer that Britain would fight to the last French soldier "cut no ice" in France, where people could see with their own eyes that Britain was pulling her whole weight with her French allies. Here a French poilu, standing by the roadside, gazes with interest as long columns of British troops, bound for the front, pass by.

*Photo, British Official, Crown copyright*



FRENCH CONTRABAND CONTROL AT WORK

The French Navy assisted the British in the economic blockade of Germany, and above a French Contraband Control vessel is seen going alongside a neutral cargo vessel in a rough sea Photographs of British Contraband Control work appear in pages 317 and 318

*Photo, Associated Press*




BRITISH BOARDING PARTY INVESTIGATES

The photograph above, taken off the British coast, shows a neutral ship hove to while sailors of a British boarding party climb aboard to examine the cargo and see that it contains no contraband goods, as explained in Chapter 30. The work is carried out as expeditiously as possible in order not to hinder neutral shipping unduly

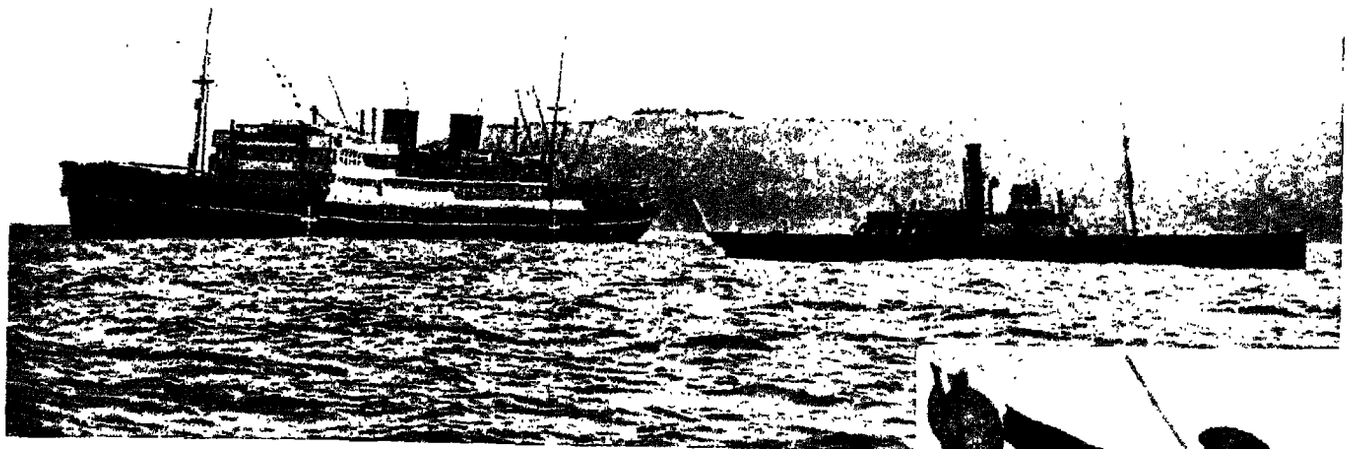
*Photo, Keystone*



VALUABLE PRIZE FALLS INTO BRITISH HANDS

It was announced on October 12, 1939, that the German Hamburg-America liner "Cap Norte" had been captured. The vessel, which had previously taken refuge at Pernambuco, put out to sea again on September 17. The photograph shows a boarding party, in a British warship's cutter, pulling out to the liner.

*Photo, "The Times"*





THE SEARCH FOR CONTRABAND

In the photograph above a British Contraband Control examination steamer is seen standing by a neutral liner which has been stopped for search. On the right, sailors of a British boarding party are seen handing up the boarding book carried by the party.

*Photos, P.N.A.; Keystone*

tons were seized as contraband, since they consisted of iron ore, fuel oil, petrol, manganese, and wheat.

In the very first week of operation, indeed, the British Contraband Control intercepted and detained large quantities of goods as to which there was evidence that they were contraband consigned to Germany, including:

| | Tons |
|---|---|
| Petroleum | 28,500 |
| Iron ore | 26,350 |
| do. (haematite) | 3,400 |
| Manganese ore | 4,600 |
| Wood pulp | 7,300 |
| Pebble phosphate | 6,000 |

Also a number of mixed cargoes.

The importance to the German military machine of petroleum imports is obvious: Germany before the war started could supply about one-third only of her peacetime needs. Iron ore is another great deficiency, Germany depending on foreign sources for at least two-thirds of her requirements. Most of Germany's manganese is imported, and phosphates are an essential fertilizer for which she is completely dependent on supplies from abroad. Thus already the Royal Navy was carrying out its historic role of cutting off the enemy's supplies on the high seas.

**£ s. d. of the Blockade**

In the second week of the war approximately 110,000 tons of goods of a value of about £500,000 were detained, and it was announced that the 30,000 tons of manganese that had been seized since the war opened represented about 7 per cent of Germany's total annual import of this vitally important commodity. In the case of molybdenum concentrates the seizures represented an even larger proportion of an alloy and metal essential for the preparation of bullet-proof and other steels. Many of the cargoes intercepted at the outset of the control had been consigned openly to Germany before the war started, and it was only natural that the amounts seized should show a diminution as weeks passed. Even so, the Contraband Control intercepted and detained 33,000 tons of goods in the last week of September, and the month's total "bag" was 289,000 tons.

German concern at the increasing effectiveness of the blockade was marked. For the first time the Nazis strove to arouse the ire of the neutrals whose shipping was subjected to search. Strange stories were given out over the German wireless of sailors of neutral ships who had put in at Weymouth for examination, being subjected to such harsh and inhuman treatment that they suddenly went mad and committed suicide by jumping overboard! Such fantasies could hardly live in the cold air of actual experience, and the neutrals had little to complain of beyond delays consequent upon the sudden institution of a new control and the necessity of consulting London before a detained cargo could be released.

The German wireless also attacked Britain's "blockade" on the ground that the inclusion of food in the list of contraband was not only inhumane but illegal. Mr. Cross was denounced as the "Minister of Starvation," and Hitler in his speech to the Reichstag on October 6 said that contraband must be defined in such a manner that "the war will be deprived of its horrible character of a fight against women, children, and non-combatants in general."

The Soviet Government, too, in a note published on October 24, protested against inclusion in the British lists of war contraband of foodstuffs and other basic articles of mass consumption, on the ground that their inclusion inevitably "leads to profound disorganization of the supply of necessaries to the peaceful civilian population, gravely endangers the health and lives of the peaceful population, and portends innumerable calamities for the masses of the people." Just as "the universally recognized principles of international law do not permit the air bombardment of the peaceful population, women, children and aged people," so "on the same grounds, the Soviet Government deems it not permissible to deprive the peaceful population of foodstuffs, fuel and clothing, and thus subject children, women and aged people and invalids to every hardship and starvation by proclaiming the goods of popular consumption as war contraband."



**CONTRABAND COMMITTEE IN SESSION**

Above, the Contraband Committee of the Ministry of Economic Warfare is seen at one of its daily sessions. In the centre of the table sits the Rt Hon Viscount Finlay, Chairman of the Committee, and on his left is Mr. Justice Morton, the Deputy Chairman

*Photo, P N A*

In the British view, however, the inclusion of foodstuffs as conditional contraband was an essential element in the economic warfare in which the Allies were now engaged against Germany. Foodstuffs have been treated as conditional contraband since the days of the French Revolution, and international law fully supports their classification as such. No British Government had ever signed any declaration that foodstuffs were not to be treated as conditional contraband. The nearest approach to such a step was in the Declaration of London of 1909, which would have debarred our Navy patrols in the North Sea from stopping both the raw materials for Germany's war industries and any food, even when destined for the German army, provided that the shipper took the simple precaution of addressing the consignment to a neutral port on the way—Rotterdam, for instance. But when war broke out in August, 1914, Britain had not ratified the Declaration, and early in that war Britain claimed the right to stop foodstuffs, though at first only those consignments sent "to order" and not to a specific addressee in a neutral country.

**Stopping Food**

During the first weeks of the First Great War huge quantities of foodstuffs were allowed to pass through the blockade to Dutch and Scandinavian ports, although it was well understood that their ultimate destination was Germany. Meanwhile, the Germans had been sinking food-ships proceeding to Britain without the slightest concern for the destination, military or civilian, of the cargoes. Such a position could not last. As mentioned earlier, in February, 1915, Germany had declared her intention of destroying all hostile merchant ships in British home waters, and it was as a reprisal that Britain then announced the complete blockade of Germany.

The fact that foodstuffs are "conditional" contraband—i.e. are contraband only in so far as they are destined to help in the prosecution of the war by feeding the Government or the armed forces—has little point nowadays. In Napoleonic times it might have been possible to draw a distinction between goods destined for the Government and the troops and those destined for the civilian population. In modern times this distinction has practically disappeared; as war is now conducted it is highly probable that foodstuffs imported into a belligerent country will serve a military end.



**FRENCH BLOCKADE MINISTER**

M. Georges Pernot, above, was appointed by the French Premier, M. Daladier, to be Minister of Blockade in his war cabinet.

*Photo, Topical*

"When practically the whole population," says Professor J. L. Brierly, "is either with the colours or engaged in some form of war work, and when governments have the power to requisition any commodity that they need and have instituted elaborate systems of control, it is practically impossible to have any assurance at all that food which is allowed to pass will be consumed by non-combatants, and, if it were, it would mean that other food would be released for military consumption."

Even in the war of 1914–18 this truth was generally recognized: it was General Ludendorff who wrote that "in this war it was impossible to distinguish where the sphere of the army and navy began and that of the people ended." No nation, indeed, has done so much to abolish the distinction between the military and the civilian population as Germany. What, it has been asked, is the object of he German submarine campaign, with its indiscriminate sinkings, if not to prevent *all* cargoes of foodstuffs from reaching this country? War today is totalitarian. Whole nations are mobilized for war, and when a government is possessed of totalitarian powers, it is impossible to determine whether a cargo destined for enemy territory may be presumed to be for use for military or quasi-military purposes. Nay, more, Britain has a stronger case than Germany in making food contraband, for it has been laid down that if a belligerent puts the whole of its people on rations, then foodstuffs can be declared, not conditional merely, but "absolute" contraband. As yet Britain was not on rations, but Germany was so even before the war began.

**A Just Measure**

So much for the legal aspect. As for the charge that the inclusion of food in the contraband list is inhumane:

"Humanity," to quote Mr. Ronald Cross, "begins at home. Think of the number of our own soldiers, sailors and airmen who would lose their lives if we allowed the enemy to prolong a war which it was in our power to shorten. That would be the worst cruelty. To prolong the whole war unnecessarily is incomparably more cruel than to exercise economic pressure on a nation, and anything that increases the general store of supplies of a nation which otherwise would be suffering from a shortage must tend to prolong the war. . . . The German Government will always have sufficient resources at its disposal to feed the German people if it chooses 'butter' rather than 'guns,' and employs sufficient of its money and men on agricultural production."

If it be asked how much food had been actually intercepted to the beginning of November, to quote Mr. Cross again, of the total seizures

"only about 14 per cent would normally be classified as foodstuffs But, of this, 9 per cent consists of commodities containing oils and fats which the German Government could just as easily use for munitions. The choice between 'guns' and 'butter' has not been a mere metaphor to the Nazis. The German Government has been diverting its supplies of fats to guns, and has, in consequence, been starving the people of butter or its equivalent. Much of the other 5 per cent consists of cereals; these might be given to the German people as food, but they could also be converted into spirit for the use of mechanical vehicles. The rest of the intercepted goods, 86 per cent of the total, in fact the overwhelming bulk of our seizures, have been materials which can be directly used for war purposes and cannot be used for food."

Little substance as there was in the German allegations of inhumanity in the matter of the seizure of food-stuffs, there was still less in their claim that the German method of submarine warfare was far less damaging to neutral interests than the British method of contraband control.

The Ministry of Economic Warfare were not slow to take up the challenge.

"The distinction between the British and German methods of conducting war against commerce at sea," it declared in an official statement "is clear. It turns largely on the use made of the submarine. In the British view, the submarine is a weapon entirely unsuited for commerce raiding purposes, since it can only with difficulty and under exceptional circumstances be so employed as to conform with the accepted rules of war. It follows that a belligerent who is seriously desirous of conforming to these rules will not normally make use of submarines for this purpose, and the fact that Germany does so habitually and on an extensive scale must in itself raise doubts as to her good faith and intentions. Nor are these doubts in any way allayed by what has occurred; in the sinking of the 'Athenia,' 'Goodwood,' 'Bosnia' and many other ships innocent lives have been lost. On the other hand, no civilian loss of life has been caused by British action and no neutral property, except contraband, is threatened by it.

"Equally clear," went on the statement, "is the difference between the effect of the British and German methods on neutral cargoes in belligerent vessels. The British regulations are that an enemy merchant ship may be sunk only if she cannot be brought in, and officers are informed that compensation may have to be paid for neutral non-contraband cargo if the enemy ship is sunk without due cause. The German practice, on the contrary, has been habitually to sink all our merchant ships without reference to any neutral cargo carried, and it should be noted that the warship used for the purpose, the submarine, is by its very nature incapable of bringing its captures in.

"Germany has now started sinking neutral ships on the ground that they are carrying contraband to Britain. As neutral ships are not, save exceptionally, liable to condemnation for the carriage of contraband, only the contraband articles themselves being so liable, this practice is quite illegal Not only is a submarine incapable of visiting and searching a neutral ship to verify her nationality and so establish the nature of her cargo, but this practice, unlike the British, gives the neutral shipowner and merchant no chance to plead his cause before a Prize Court, but condemns him to the certain loss of both ship and cargo. The ordinary British practice is to release the ship after the suspected contraband has been unloaded for judgement by a Prize Court.





**FRANCE ADDS HER PRESSURE TO THE BLOCKADE**

**Like the English, the French contraband system proved itself highly efficient and was the means of depriving Germany of vast quantities of stocks necessary for carrying on the war. The upper photograph shows merchant shipping awaiting examination at a French port. Above, a Norwegian vessel is signalling with international code flags to the chief of the French navigation police.**

*Photos, Planet News; Associated Press*

"The conclusion to be drawn is that the German method of economic warfare is now, as in the past, violent and undiscriminating, and, owing to the use of the submarine inherently likely to cause loss of life, even where there is no deliberate intention of doing this. The British method, on the other hand, pursued in legitimate exercise of Britain's sea-power, is directed to lawful ends and is not aimed against human life or innocent cargoes. The instruments by which it is carried on, moreover, are such as to permit full conformity with the laws of war and to avoid loss of life or unnecessary damage. The difference is that between what is essentially a weapon of terror, even if wielded, as it often is, by men personally brave and gallant, and a carefully regulated system of warfare under the control of properly constituted Courts."



**NAZI PRESSURE ON NEUTRALS**

**The Germans, too, established a system of contraband control, but with their fleet bottled up it was only effective locally. Above, a German boarding party is seen rowing towards a Danish ship to search for contraband. This photograph was used in a German paper to show that German North Sea control was complete.**

*Photo, Wide World*

Of course, as Mr. Chamberlain said in the House of Commons on September 20, "the suppression of traffic in the contraband of war must, of necessity, cause some inconvenience to neutrals," but "it is our intention to reduce this to a minimum." In another passage of the same speech he made the point that "the interests of neutrals are, indeed, the same as our own. In war, as in peace, we depend for our life upon the uninterrupted flow of trade, and it is our fundamental policy to preserve, as far as possible, the conditions of normal trading." In any case, the dislocation of the neutrals' economy was considerably less than was alleged by the Nazi propagandists. Such stories as that issued on September 16 by the German official news agency bear obvious signs of being the manufacture of a fertile imagination. In this case it was said that the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs had documentary evidence that the British Government had recently addressed notes to neutral countries forbidding them to send or transmit certain raw materials to Germany, and threatening that, if they did so, this would be regarded as an infraction of their neutrality. These allegations were, however, at once denied by the Governments of Holland, Sweden and Norway. Britain's object is very simple: to prevent sea-borne cargoes of contraband reaching Germany. "It is a difficult task," says the Premier's statement quoted above, "to discriminate between genuine neutral commerce and that intended for Germany, but we mean to do it, and are confident that it can be done."

**Pacifying the Neutrals**

That the discrimination was working to Germany's disadvantage was obvious from the bitter attacks made upon the "blockade" by the Nazi commentators. In the first two months of war the Allied contraband control organizations intercepted and detained over half a million tons of contraband suspected of being destined for Germany. The British alone in that period were responsible for the seizure of over 400,000 tons. The more important items were classified by the Ministry, and the details printed here give some idea of the grave effect which the loss of the goods must have had on Germany's economic life.

| | Tons |
|---|---|
| Fertilizers, fats, and feeding stuffs for cattle .. .. ..nearly | 75,000 |
| Raw materials needed for explosives .. .. .. ..nearly | 10,000 |
| Fibres, jute, wool, cotton, hides and skins .. .. ..nearly | 15,000 |
| Fuel (petroleum products) .. *(including 12,000,000 gals. petrol)* | 87,000 |
| Raw materials used for guns, shells and armour plate .. over | 12,000 |
| *Other raw materials for the* armament industry .. ..nearly | 40,000 |

By far the greater part of these consignments, it will be seen, consisted of materials directly applicable to military use.

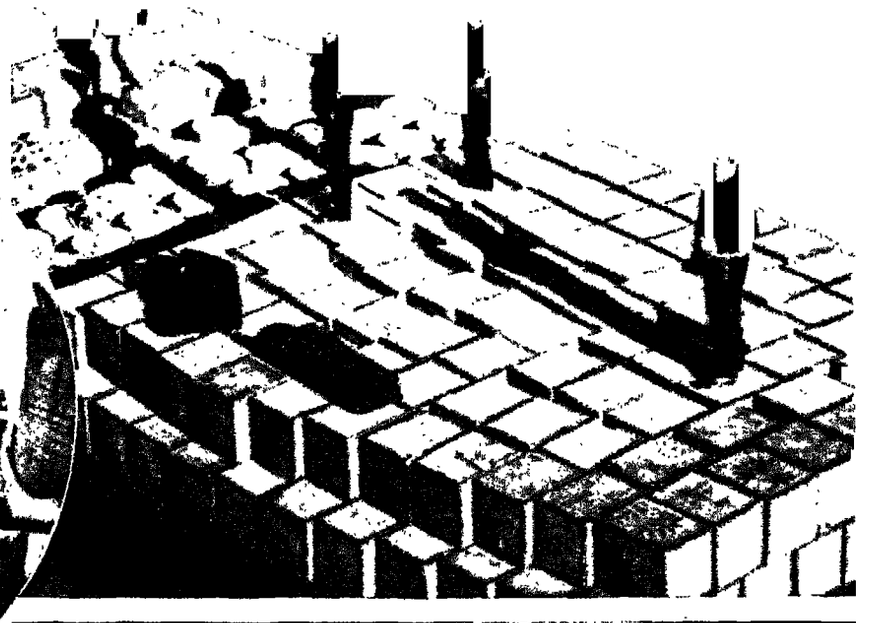
**A Week's Figures**

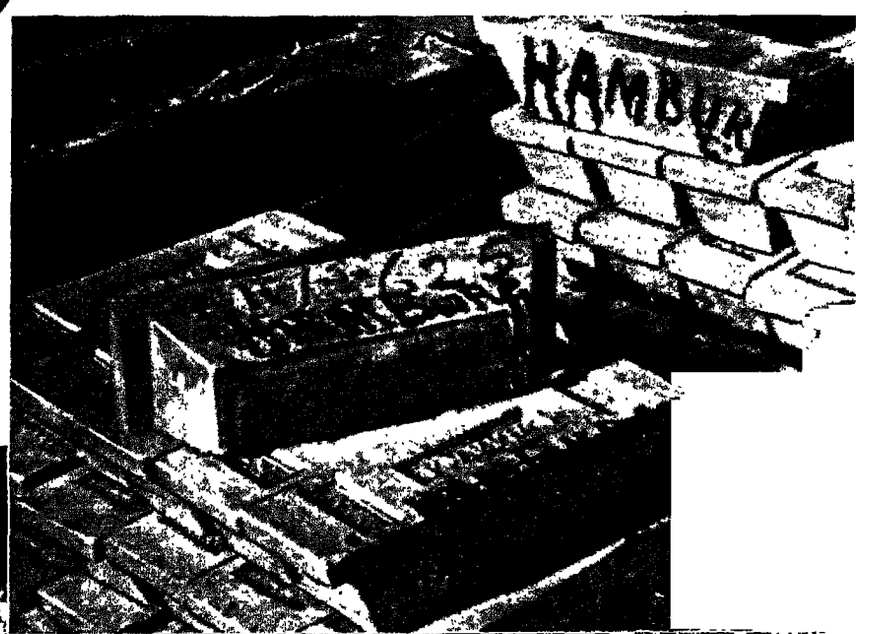
Every week scores of vessels were examined by the officers of the Contraband Control. Thus in the week ending November 4, 137 new cases of ships were considered in addition to 77 cases carried forward from the previous week. Classified according to nationality, the vessels examined included 41 Dutch, 35 Italian, 28 Norwegian, 14 Greek, 13 Danish, 11 United States, 10 Swedish, 7 Finnish, and 7 Belgian. During the period four cargoes were wholly seized and 102 wholly released. In 33 cases part-cargoes were seized. Generally about half the number of ships putting in for examination at one or other of the three bases were cleared in less than a week, and the balance were given their clearance papers in ten days or so.

From the very beginning of the war the French Ministry of Economic Warfare worked in close conjunction with its opposite number in Britain; a French liaison mission, indeed, was permanently established in the British Ministry. Early in November M. Pernot, French Minister of Economic Warfare, announced that the French Navy had already seized 223,297 tons of contraband goods; of this quantity, 101,653 tons were raw materials for manufacturing, 35,000 tons liquid fuel, and 240 tons were arms.

These figures, it should be realized, do not tell the whole story. The seizures by the Allied fleets are sufficiently impressive, but after the first few weeks of war they were bound to decline as the last of the cargoes consigned openly to Germany before the war began were intercepted and detained. After that initial phase the contraband seizures represented goods about which there was at least some doubt concerning their status; those goods in the contraband





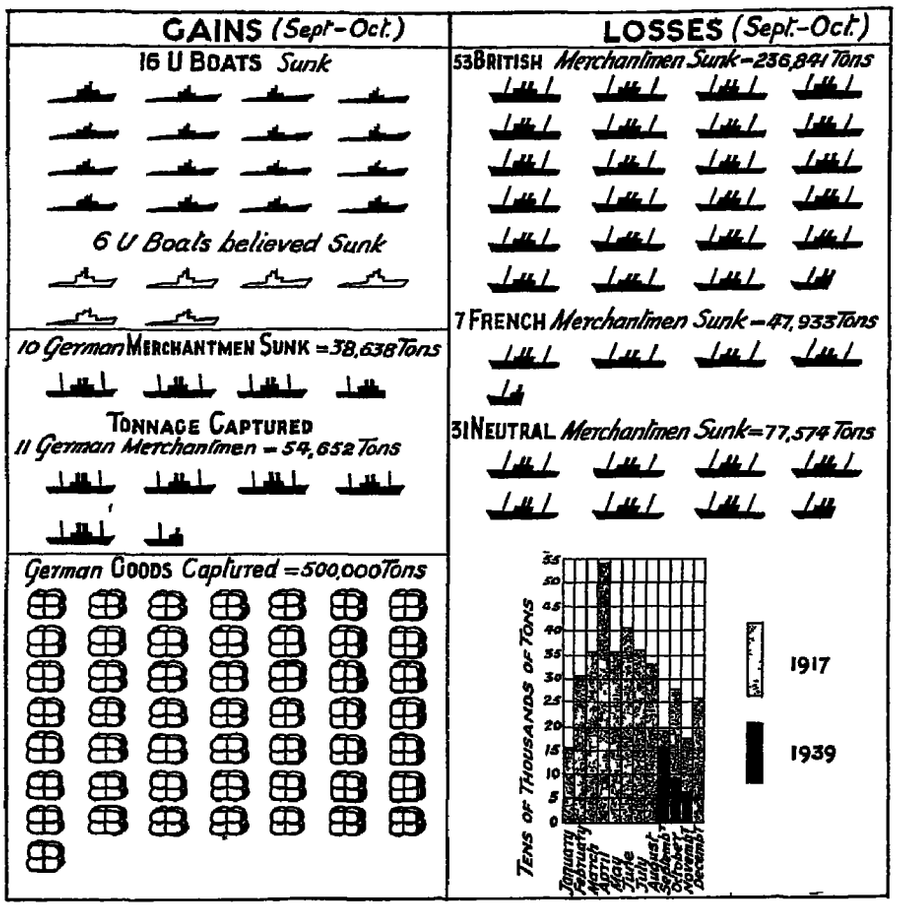



## MERCHANDISE THAT NEVER REACHED GERMANY

**The British were apt to forget the activities of the French Navy and the part it played in the enforcing of the blockade of Germany. These photographs of contraband goods of all kinds destined for the Third Reich but captured by the French contraband control are enlightening; they were all taken at French seaports. Particularly interesting are the ingots (right) destined for Hamburg, but held up "somewhere in France."**

*Photos, Courtesy of the French Embassy; Planet News*






PICTURE DIAGRAMS OF THE ECONOMIC WAR

The diagram above shows in a graphic manner the results of the first two months of economic warfare at sea. The comparative table in the right-hand bottom corner shows the amount of British merchant tonnage sunk during the months of September, October and November, 1939, compared with similar sinkings in 1917, the year in which Britain suffered most heavily from U-boat warfare in the First Great War

categories which normally would have been consigned to Germany were not in fact dispatched. Some authorities estimated that in the war's first two months Germany was deprived of half her normal peacetime imports, and every vessel of her mercantile marine—making a tonnage of over four millions—ran for safety to neutral harbours as soon as the struggle began. (Some 54,000 tons of shipping were actually captured by the Allies, and nearly as much more was sunk or scuttled.)

**Germany's Needs**

Of the raw materials which were absolutely necessary for carrying on modern war—coal, iron ore, other metals, rubber, timber, textile fibres, and oil—Germany in peacetime was self-sufficient only as regards coal and timber. Most of her overseas sources of supply were closed to her as soon as war began, by the Anglo-French control of the North Sea and predominance in the Mediterranean. The Baltic and the Black Sea remained open, and the new German-Soviet pact, followed by trade agreements, gave rise in Germany to the most extravagant hopes of Russian economic support.

In general Russia produced no large quantities of raw materials which she could spare for export to Germany without doing considerable damage to her own economy. If political considerations required it the Soviet authorities would not hesitate, we may well believe, to require that their people should render aid out of their own insufficiency to their new Nazi allies, but there were limits to production even in a totalitarian state of society. Russia was not an exporter of iron ore, but needed her whole output to satisfy her own needs; nickel, tin, lead, and antimony she did not produce at all; copper she imported. In manganese, however, she could be of real assistance. Rubber is not a Russian product, and the U.S.S.R. output of textile fibres was inconsiderable Timber and coal she might supply, but in these Germany was not so terribly deficient. There remained oil—and Russia's export surplus of one million tons would not go far to meet Germany's estimated wartime need of seventeen million tons, of which she might produce from coal by distillation some two or three million tons only. Here it may be noted that the Polish oilfield had been producing 500,000 tons a year, and Rumania in 1938 produced 6,500,000 tons of oil. Although Germany in anticipation of the war built up a large oil reserve—perhaps 4,000,000 tons—the Polish campaign must have made large inroads into her stocks, and the future situation could hardly appear encouraging.

Not even in foodstuffs could Russia render much assistance to her new ally. Cereals and sugar she might perhaps furnish, but for some time past the Soviet had not been a large exporter of wheat, and the last pre-war figures gave a mere half-million tons as being available for export.

Moreover, the Soviet railway system would find it extremely difficult to stand the strain of any increased traffic, and the difference in gauge between the German-Polish systems and the Russian was a further hindrance to speedy collaboration.

**Germany Then and Now**

On the morrow of the German-Soviet pact the German people were bidden rejoice, for now not only the menace of a war on two fronts had been defeated, but the promise of Soviet economic assistance would make defeat impossible. Some of the German people may have recalled, however, that much the same comfortable assurances were given out in 1917–1918 by the Kaiser's Government. In those years Germany and her Austro-Hungarian satellite controlled politically, militarily and economically not only the whole of what is Germany today (with the exception of Alsace-Lorraine), but Poland, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, the Baltic States, and the Ukraine and other huge portions of the Tsar's realm. Yet, controlling that vast block of territory, Germany found its economic resources altogether insufficient for the winning of victory or even the obtaining of a fairly satisfactory peace.

Nazi Germany started the war of 1939 in a far less favourable position than Imperial Germany in 1914. Then the Reich was rich, prosperous, well-fed, flourishing. Its successor of today had been told that it could not have both guns and butter and that the choice must be guns; the German people had been on rations for years, they were over-taxed and under-nourished. Behind the apparently solid façade were germinating the seeds of unrest, disaffection, sabotage, the bitter hostility of party and class, of race and faith.

Small wonder that the Nazis, faced with the prospect of a long war with a resolute and hitherto undefeated enemy, and feeling already the stranglehold of the economic war, should resort to desperate measures to relieve the pressure. There is no German navy fit to compare with that which was the Kaiser's pride in 1914, but the U-boats have left their harbours once again and have taken toll of the Allied and neutral shipping. In September and October, 1939, ninety-one merchant vessels were sunk by enemy action—U-boats and surface raiders—and of these 53 were British (236,841 tons), 7 were French (47,933 tons), and 31 were ships of neutral countries (77,574 tons).

But in his stock-taking of the general position reached in the first six weeks Mr. Churchill was able to claim that, while something from a third to a quarter of Germany's total U-boat fleet had been destroyed, the British Mercantile Marine of 21,000,000 tons had experienced a loss of a little less than one per cent by U-boat action, mines and accidents; during the same period we had captured from the enemy 29,000 tons and had been refreshed by the arrival of new ships amounting to a total of 104,000 tons.

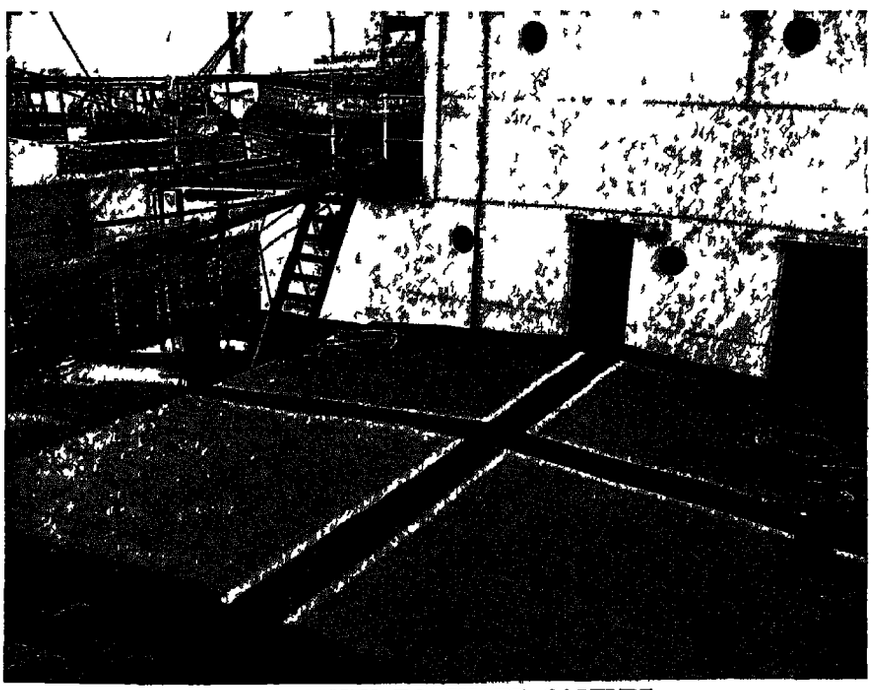
Even a month earlier Mr. Churchill was able to inform the House that "we have, in fact, got more supplies in this war this afternoon than we should have had if no war had been declared and if no U-boats had come into action." And



**UNAVAILING NAZI TRICKS**

**Many ruses were adopted by German vessels to elude the vigilance of the British blockade. In the photograph above barrels of resin were discovered concealed beneath heaps of coal on the German ship "Leander," which, moreover, was flying the Russian flag.**

*Photo, Keystone*



**NAZI RUSES TO EVADE CAPTURE**

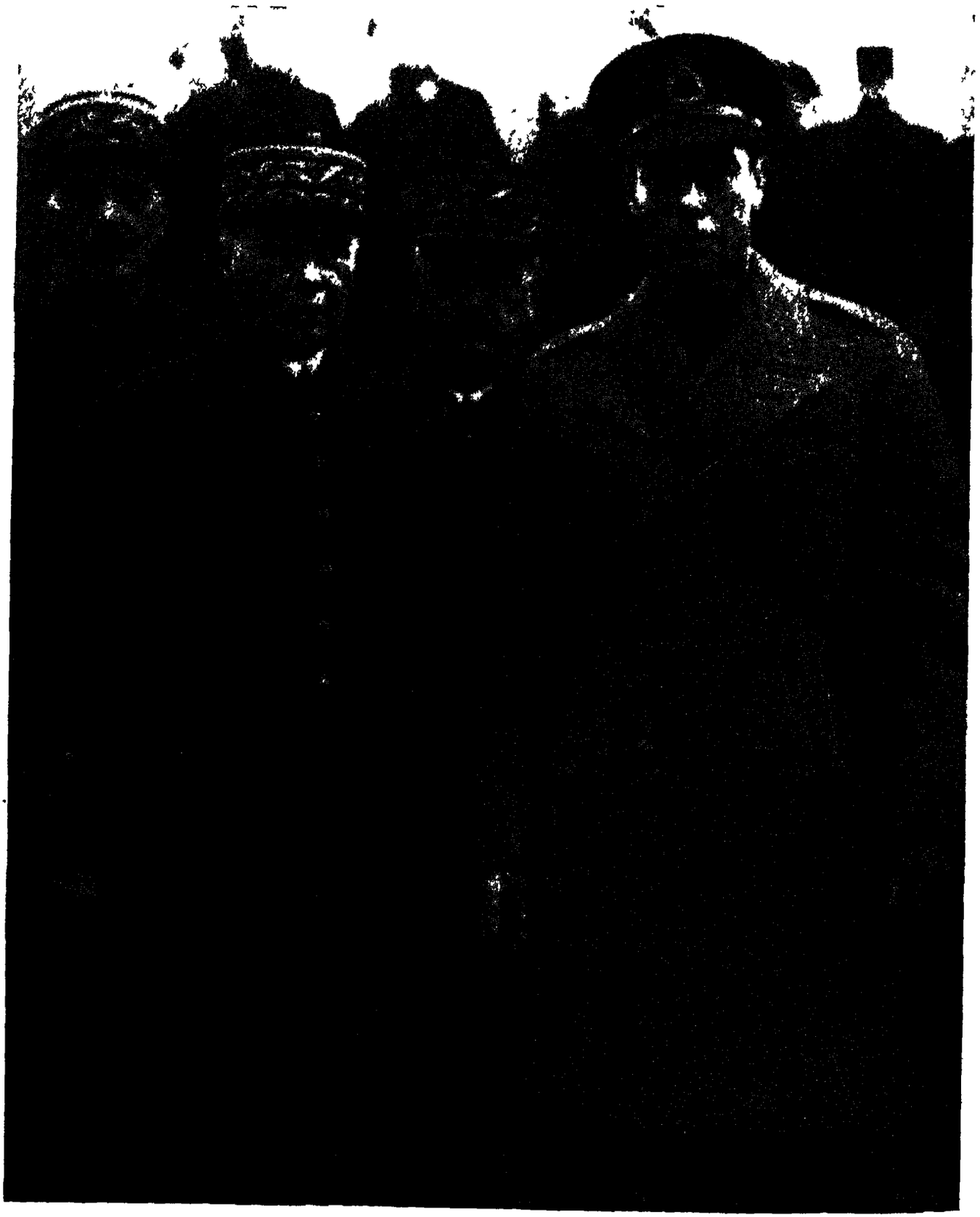
**Here is another device adopted by German ships in their efforts to defeat the blockade. Above is seen the Norwegian flag painted over the hatches of the German ship "Konsul Hendrik Fisser," which was masquerading as a Norwegian ship, the "Ora," when captured.**

*Photo, Planet News*

his proud claim that "at that rate it will take a long time to starve us out" was increasingly justified as the weeks and months wore on.

Germany, however, must be already feeling the pinch. Not in this war was there that half-hearted and ineffective "blockade" of 1914 to 1917, when huge supplies were allowed to slip into Germany through neutral countries. In the early years of the First Great War the German home fires were kept burning with British coal; German soldiers rode to battle on the backs of British horses; German guns were made of British iron; German 'planes were driven by petrol to convey which British ships had had to run the risks of the Atlantic crossing.

In 1939 Britain and France started the war, as it were, in much the same position as in 1917. The crushing triumph of the blockade of 1918 had become part of accepted history, and the lessons of those terrible days had not been forgotten. In the fight against Nazism, as against Prussian militarism 25 years earlier, the economic weapon was being used with hard determination born of the will to win.



## ROYAL VISIT TO FRANCE'S ARMY

On December 4, 1939, the King went to France and, after spending several days with his troops, visited the French zone. He met the President of the French Republic and the French Premier, and in company with the Generalissimo, General Marie Gustave Gamelin, made a tour of the Maginot Line defences. Above, His Majesty with General Gamelin.

*Photo, Wide World*

Chapter 31

# MEN WHO LED THE FIGHTING FORCES IN THE FIRST MONTHS OF WAR

*Records of the Allied Commanders: Positions Won by Merit—Gamelin, the Generalissimo—The French Second-in-Command—Gort, 'British Army's Best Soldier'—'Big Bill' Ironside—Corps Commanders—Leaders of the Allied Navies—Air Marshals—The C.-in-C. of the British Air Forces in France—Fighter, Bomber and Coastal Commands—Vuillemin, the Fighting Air Ace*

At the beginning of a war in which the first clash of arms on land was postponed from month to month, in which the very disposition of the troops was a closely guarded secret, the reputation of the military leaders necessarily rested on their past records. With no sensational success to claim, nor any lamentable retreat to be explained, generals, admirals and even marshals of the air remained figure-heads to the public, men with a past of honourable achievement but a future as yet sufficiently obscure.

Not always does a nation embark on war with the best leadership available—and no war has lasted any length of time without reputations being made and lost—but according to the most trustworthy military opinion the Anglo-French alliance in September 1939 had elected to its highest posts men of exceptional ability and experience and, regardless of age or seniority, those best fitted to fulfil an arduous and unpredictable task.

**Great Men in Command**

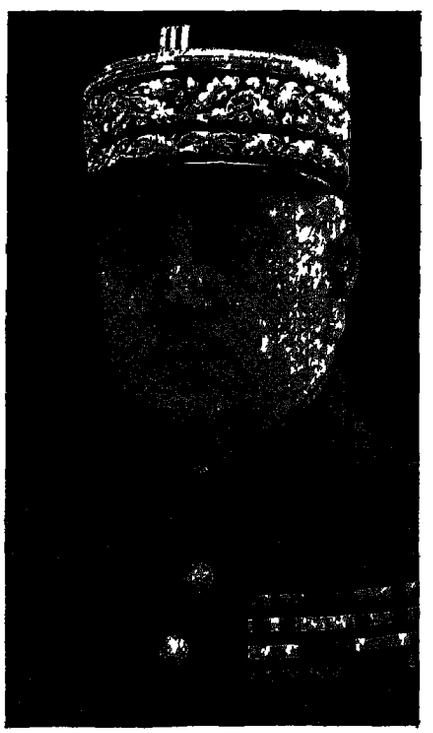
The briefest examination of their records will show that all the Allied Army leaders reached their commanding positions through personal merit, that every one of them had had first-hand experience of warfare on the European battlefields against the same enemy that now confronted them, and that during the years between 1918 and 1939 all had had a directing hand in moulding the new military machine.

The phrase "regardless of age" leads directly to the Generalissimo, General Gamelin, and the British Commander-in-Chief, Viscount Gort. The French did not hesitate to retain the services of their most brilliant general despite his 66 years, the British to choose for commander a man who was no more than 53. The question of age in leadership is so much a relative question of the activity of mind and body that no hard and fast opinion can be held, but in the main Great Britain was happy in the selection of a younger Commander-in-Chief and well content that the supreme direction of the war should be in the hands of one to whom old age was already beckoning.

In this respect it may be interesting to compare the ages of the military leaders of 1914 with those of 1939. The portly and paternal Joffre was 62, four years younger than Gamelin; French was 62, nine years older than Gort. Robertson was 54, five years younger than Ironside. Haig was 53, five years younger than Dill, and Brooke and Smith-Dorrien were of the same age, 56.

It will be seen that the chiefs of 1939 were in some cases older than those of 1914, but if there is any advantage or disadvantage in a few years one way or another this could be offset by the vastly greater intensive experience of the conditions of modern warfare possessed by the present leaders.

Unlike Hindenburg, Gamelin was not called from retirement, nor indeed were any of the Allied commanders.



**FRANCE'S SECOND-IN-COMMAND**

General Alphonse Joseph Georges (above), a member of the French Supreme War Council and Commander of the French Armies of the North-East, served for some time on the staff of General Foch.

*Photo, Planet News*

They were all men of continuous service, holding at the outbreak of war the highest and most responsible positions. They were not called upon to familiarize themselves with an entirely changed set of conditions, with the rapid advance in mechanization, or with the introduction of new weapons. For these developments they had themselves been responsible.

The decision, painfully taken after four years of war in 1918, to place the Allied forces in the West under the supreme command of a French general was agreed to with alacrity in the early conversations of 1939, and at the outbreak of war the title and the powers of Generalissimo were bestowed on General Gamelin. This remarkable soldier had since 1931 held a post unique in French military history: he was made Chief of General Staff of National Defence, by virtue of which he had authority to co-ordinate all branches of the defence services. With the additional powers of Generalissimo now given him he held a position in the military hierarchy little lower than that of Napoleon himself.

**General Gamelin**

This dapper, quiet-voiced, quiet-mannered General, conspicuous by the smartness of his appearance (which belied his age by several years), had gained the complete confidence of the French people. He had been born a soldier, and, some say at first against his will, he was bred one. There is a charming picture painted by his mother of the infant Gamelin, dressed in flounced skirts, beating a toy drum. Mme. Gamelin, it is said, predicted his future. It is more probable that it never even entered her head that he would do otherwise than follow the family profession, for on both sides he came of a distinguished line of soldiers. His father was Auditor-General of the French Army; a great-uncle was the last French military governor of Strasbourg before the Franco-Prussian war of 1870; his great-grandfather had served under Napoleon, and yet more remote ancestors had fought under the banner of Louis XIV.

His family had their origins in French Flanders, but Gamelin was born

in Paris, where his father was employed. He was brought up a Roman Catholic, and after his preliminary education was sent to the French military college of St Cyr. Here he had a distinguished career as a student, passing out with the highest marks. Like many a famous French soldier, his early service was spent in Africa, but he was clearly marked down for higher training, and in 1899 he went to the Ecole Supérieure de Guerre. Here he had amongst other instructors the future Marshal Foch.

In 1904 the young Gamelin joined Joffre's staff, and we may pass over the intervening ten years to find him still with that general, now commander-in-chief of the French army. As a member of the operations branch, Gamelin was much in the counsels of his chief. He is described as constantly by his side, silent unless his opinion were asked or his infallible memory for detail called upon. Then in few words he would state his considered view or provide the required facts. There is no doubt—and Joffre himself testified to it on more than one occasion—that Gamelin was that exceptional type of assistant—the man who combined the virtues of the efficient subordinate with those high qualities of mind which marked him out as a successor in leadership.

History has credited him with a major part in the momentous decision in September 1914 to counter-attack on the flank of the German waves then so perilously near Paris. He himself pooh-poohs the idea that he did more than draft the order that resulted in the successful battle of the Marne—which arrested the German sweep through Belgium, saved the Channel ports, threw the Germans back on the line of the Aisne, where they were kept for nearly four years, and altered the whole course of the war. There is no doubt at General Headquarters, where strategical opinions were at variance, that it was Gamelin and the ever-resourceful Galliéni (then military governor of Paris) who persuaded the cautious Joffre to strike on September 6, 1914, with such immediately gratifying results.

Although Gamelin became Chief of the Operations Branch, he did not remain a staff officer throughout the war. He became a brigade and divisional commander, earning credit in the field as solid as that he had gained at the conference table.

After the war he was employed on a military mission to Brazil, during which he did much to enhance French prestige in that country; and he also performed one more warlike service of great value to France when, in 1935, he was mainly instrumental in crushing the Druse rebellion in Syria.

A distinguished military historian (Capt. Liddell Hart) has referred to his "innate calmness of temperament, his air of detachment, his power of unravelling complicated issues and expounding them in a simple way to untechnically minded ministers. In discussion he rarely raises his voice, indulges in no gesticulations, and is as ready to listen to others while waiting the right moment to intervene as in the years when he was Joffre's shadow." Gamelin's favourite phrase is said to have been "I am a philosopher," to which Joffre added the comment after the battle of the Marne: "If this be philosophy it is time all generals were philosophers."

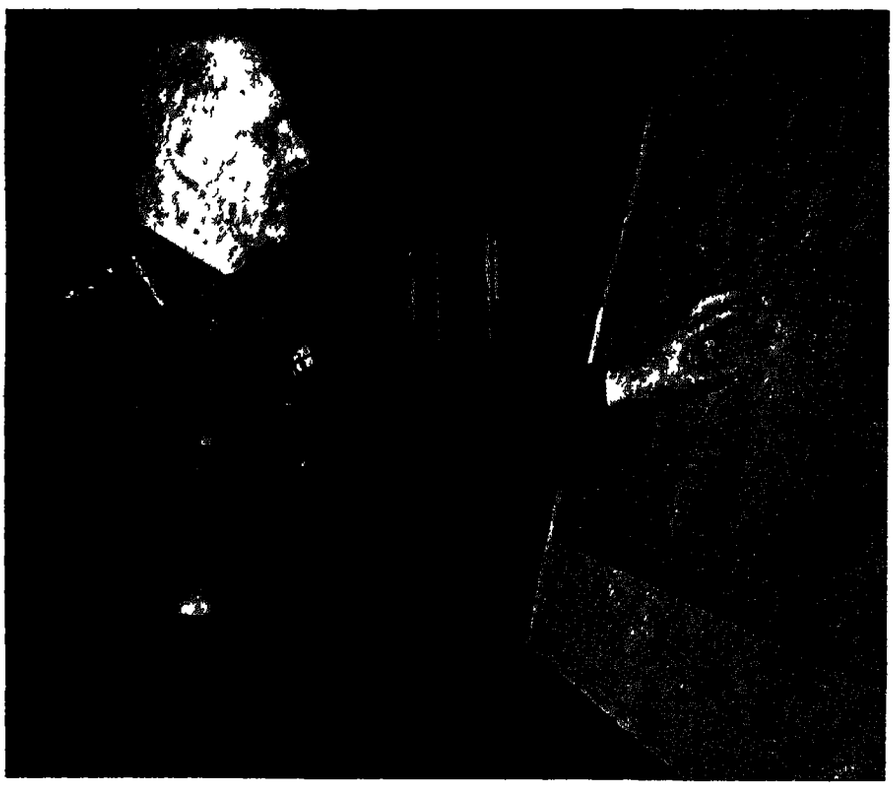
One final picture of the Generalissimo as he was in the days of the last war may well be that of General Spears, who referred to him, "eloquent and low-voiced," as this "chubby little officer who looked so young and who exercised such a mastery over himself that it seemed impossible that he should ever give himself away."

**General Georges**

Second in the military hierarchy of France at the outbreak of war was General Georges, an officer of 64 years of age, who bore the title of Commandant of the French army. As Gamelin was to some extent the lineal descendant in military upbringing of Joffre, so Georges owed the chief inspiration of his military career to Foch. But in the material circumstances of his birth and upbringing Georges had vastly different origins from Gamelin. He was a child of the people, with no proud soldier ancestry calling to him for emulation. His father has been variously described as a gendarme, a blacksmith and a village schoolmaster. It is immaterial which humble occupation he followed—the important fact is that his son had to make his way to the top without influence and by the force of his own character.

Georges was a student at St. Cyr, and as a subaltern saw service at Algiers. He, too, had a brilliant career at the Ecole de Guerre, and at the outbreak of the war of 1914–18 was commanding a battalion in the army of General Castelnau. He then joined the staff of General Foch, and during the occupation of the Ruhr was chief of staff to General Degoutte.

Those years with Foch did much to influence Georges' character and outlook. No one could come within the sphere of that incurable optimist without



**SEEKING THE ROAD TO VICTORY**

**General Lord Gort, V.C., Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force, is here seen examining one of the many maps which are the sole mural ornaments of his office at General Headquarters. Before his appointment as C.-in-C., Lord Gort was Chief of the Imperial General Staff, a post in which he was succeeded by General Sir Edmund Ironside.**

*Photo, "Match," Paris*



**BRITAIN'S ARMY CHIEF IN HIS OFFICE-BEDROOM**

General Sir Edmund Ironside, D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff, seldom had time to visit his home. He slept in his room at the War Office; here he is seen changing his shoes for boots before his short daily ride in the Row.

*Photo, Topical*

catching something of the buoyancy of his mind and spirit. One recalls his famous message of 1914: "My centre is broken, my right is giving way. Situation excellent, I am attacking." Or again later at Doullens, during the dark days of March 1918, when the German offensive had penetrated so dangerously into the Allied lines. "It is here," said Foch, "we must stop the Boche. It is only necessary to give the order—it is sufficient to say 'We retreat no more' . . . France is France—she does not die."

Georges inherited much of this gallant bravado, and he, like his master, had complete confidence in his country's inviolable strength. After the war he held the post of military secretary to Maginot, whose foresight provided France with that immensely strong barrier along the eastern frontier which bears his name. Further service at Algiers as G.O.C. the 13th Corps was followed by his appointment to the Supreme War Council. It was in his capacity as a member that he was involved in the outrage in November 1934 at Marseilles, when King Alexander of Yugoslavia and M. Barthou of the French Cabinet were assassinated. General Georges was in the same carriage, and was so seriously wounded that for some time his life was despaired of. Actually he was saved from death by a Serbian decoration, for the bullet glanced off this into the left shoulder blade instead of piercing the heart.

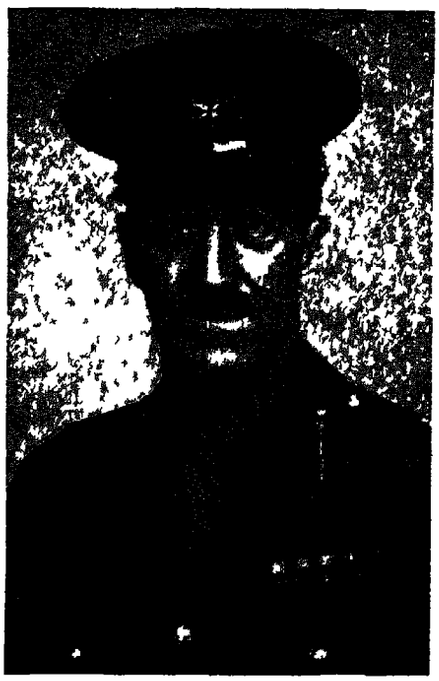
Georges was endowed with a naturally gay and lively disposition, and the hazards of war and peace left him with unimpaired vivacity. This showed itself in his leisure moments, but during his long working hours he was always a man of unflagging industry, a tireless student, and one to whom the habit of deep thought was second nature. Like Pétain, his first preoccupation had always been the well-being of his troops. Foch, it is said, always thought that he had enough men to attack, Pétain that he never had enough. Georges is quoted as saying, "I would never willingly order an attack unless I was certain of success."

It was also said of Georges that he inherited Foch's hatred of formulas and hard and fast military doctrines. "There is only one doctrine in war—common sense," said Foch, and Georges accepted this view. Like many other great strategists, he early knew that maps were more valuable than books, and he studied maps so that the very woodland paths or desert tracks of any likely theatre of war were familiar to him.

**Student of Maps**

Of such a character were the two men who in 1939 assumed the supreme commands in France. In Viscount Gort and Sir Edmund Ironside Great Britain was fortunate in having two soldiers of almost equal experience and of a proved leadership in war.

Gort had leap-frogged over the heads of many senior major-generals to become, in 1937, Military Secretary to the Secretary of State for War, and later Chief of Imperial General Staff. His distinguished military record both during and after the war of 1914–1918 fully justified this promotion. He was further promoted full general, and on September 4, 1939, he was [illegible]



**DEPUTY C.I.G.S.**

**Major-General Hugh R. S. Massy, D.S.O. (above), was appointed Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff when Sir Ronald Adam vacated this post to become Commander of the Third Corps**

*Photo Elliott & Fry*

of 53, appointed Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force.

John Standish Surtees Prendergast Vereker, 6th Viscount Gort, came of one of the most distinguished Norman-Irish families. He was educated at Harrow, where he underwent his first military training in the O.T.C., and afterwards at Sandhurst. At the age of 19 he was commissioned to the Grenadier Guards, two battalions of which he was destined to lead with brilliant success in the war of 1914–18.

In the early stages of that war Gort was A.D.C. (then holding the rank of Captain) to Sir Douglas Haig, and afterwards to Sir Charles Monro. Then he became a G.S.O.3 on General Headquarters staff, and later Brigade Major. In this latter capacity he is said to have had an important share in planning the projected landing on the Belgian coast, which was to have been a major operation of the summer offensive of 1917. It was a brilliantly conceived manoeuvre, for which much intensive training was done, but the initial failure of those protracted battles which came to be known colloquially as "Third Ypres," or Passchendaele, rendered it abortive. It is an interesting speculation how the Germans might have reacted to a sudden flank attack from the sea, and what laurels might have been earned by the young Brigade-Major who was at the heart of the scheme. But laurels in abundance were to be his, and before the war was over he had won a Military Cross, a D.S.O. with two bars (or, as some prefer to say, three D.S.O.s), had been mentioned nine times in dispatches, and finally had been awarded the V.C —the supreme decoration "for valour."

In April 1917 Gort left the staff and returned to regimental duties as commanding officer of the 4th Battalion Grenadier Guards. He was in the front line with his battalion during the third battle of Ypres, when, it may be remembered, the Guards justified their reputation by invariably taking their objectives. He was in command again of the 4th Grenadiers at Cambrai, that distressful battle which opened so brilliantly, which was a glorious victory for the tanks, and which ended in a devastating German counter-attack that completely nullified these results.

Later Gort succeeded to the command of the 1st Battalion of the Grenadiers, and was leading them during the great retreat of March 1918. The zenith of his career as a regimental officer was, however, reached on September 27 of that year, when he led the battalion to the attack across the Canal du Nord, near Flesquières. Lieut.-Colonel Gort was wounded at the outset, and at the forming-up ground found himself facing very severe artillery and machine-gun fire. The "London Gazette," announcing that he had been awarded the V.C., said:

"Although wounded, he quickly grasped the situation, directed a platoon to proceed down a sunken road to make a flanking attack and, under terrific fire, went across open ground to obtain the assistance of a tank, which he personally led and directed to the best possible advantage. While thus fearlessly exposing himself he was again severely wounded by a shell. Notwithstanding considerable loss of blood, after lying on a stretcher for a while, he insisted on getting up and personally directing the further attack. By his magnificent example of devotion to duty and utter disregard of personal safety all ranks were inspired to exert themselves to the utmost, and the attack resulted in the capture of over 200 prisoners, two batteries of field guns, and numerous machine-guns. Lieutenant-Colonel Viscount Gort then proceeded to organize the defence of the captured position until he collapsed: even then he refused to leave the field until he had seen the 'success signal' go up on the final objective.

"The successful advance of the battalion was mainly due to the valour, devotion and leadership of this very gallant officer."



**COMMANDERS IN THE FIELD**

**The commanders of the First and Second Corps, General Sir John Dill (right) and Lt.-Gen. Alan Brooke, are here seen in consultation together in the British sector on the Western Front.**

*Photo, Sport & General*



**LEADER OF THE THIRD CORPS**

**Sir Ronald Forbes Adam, D.S.O., an artilleryman, served during the 1914-18 war in France and Italy. Deputy C.I.G.S. in 1939, he was, shortly after the outbreak of war, selected for command of the Third Corps.**

*Photo, Bassano*

Gort's post-War career was not at first meteoric. In 1927 he was holding the comparatively junior job of G.S.O.1 to the Shanghai Defence Force. He was Director of Military Training in India from 1932 to 1936, when he came home to take up the post of Commandant of the Staff College at Camberley. His selection as Military Secretary and C.I.G.S. has been recorded, and it was probably from this time anticipated that he would be given command of the Field Force in event of war.

The story that he was ever called "Tiger" Gort is an invention, but one who met him at the War Office in the early days of the present war (the distinguished writer, Mr. J. Wentworth Day) said: "You feel that here's a man who knows his job, who has confidence in himself, and who has that sixth quality which makes the natural leader. There's a sense of tremendous, controlled energy, of great determination about Lord Gort." Two senior old fire-eaters whose opinion is worthy of the greatest respect thus expressed themselves: Lord Cavan called Gort the "Army's best soldier": and Sir Ian Hamilton said, "Thank God we are now in command of a proper soldier and we shall not be shot sitting."

In private life the Commander-in-Chief always devoted a considerable time to keeping fit. As became the grandson of that great old sporting writer, Robert Surtees, he cultivated many sports, amongst them skiing and small boat sailing. He qualified as an air pilot when in the late forties.

A correspondent of "The Times" thus described Gort's G.H.Q. in France: "The study of the Commander-in-Chief is a large high room with a few simple articles of furniture. A wooden table stands on trestles in the middle of the room with a high-backed wooden chair behind it. On it lay a wire tray, a paper case and a few simple office gadgets. Opposite the table large maps on blackboards hold the secrets of the British military dispositions. . . ." In this château hidden in the woods this observer found staff billets and offices—"little more elaborate than those of a company headquarters in the front line."

Lord Gort

About this time the public became familiar with the photograph of another study, that of the Chief of Imperial General Staff, Sir Edmund Ironside, at the War Office. If more comfortable in its furnishings, a camp bed beside the desk testified to the unceasing vigilance of that indomitable man.

At the outbreak of war no name on the active list was better known to the public than Ironside. Without detracting from the brilliance of his lonely adventure at Archangel or his great services in the Near East, much may be attributed to the name itself. No artillery cadet ever started his career with a name more likely to capture the imagination of the British people, or one they were likely to hold more retentively in their memory.

Ironside, who was a son of a Surgeon-Major in the Army, first saw service as a subaltern in the South African War. He was mentioned in dispatches and did invaluable secret service work disguised as a Boer wagon driver. The maps which he based on his journey through German territory are said to have been used by General Botha in the S.W. African campaign of 1914.

During the war of 1914–18 Ironside held staff appointments almost throughout, but in March 1918, when all available troops were thrown in to stop the German offensive, he brought into the line the personnel of the Small Arms School of which he was Commandant. He then took over the shattered 99th Brigade, which he led until September, when he again returned to the staff. He became a major-general at the age of 39, and it was at this time that he was given command of the Archangel expedition, which, whatever the paucity of its results, demanded considerable endurance and resourcefulness. In 1920 he commanded the North Persian Force whose mission it was to evacuate Mesopotamia.

When, at the early age of 42, he became Commandant of the Staff College he established a record. Subsequent positions which he held were Lieutenant of the Tower of London and Quartermaster General in India. He was promoted full general in 1935 and was General Officer C.-in-C. Eastern Command from 1936 to 1938. He was so clearly marked for the highest posts that it came as a shock, late in 1938, to find him appointed Governor of Gibraltar, for this had long been recognized as a decorative appointment indicating the last stage on the way to retirement. But we may assume that, with the threat of war growing daily more menacing, it needed a master hand to put the defences of the Rock in order. There was no doubt when war did break out where his high duties lay.

Ironside is a man of big stature, 6 ft. 4 ins. in height, broad of shoulder, with a rusty moustache and beetling eyebrows. He has been described as "crag browed," and his high forehead is deeply lined with thought. He, too, is a soldier student, with an immense command of languages (he is said to speak fourteen), and his study of the Battle of Tannenberg is regarded as a masterpiece of strategical and historical criticism. His favourite working dress in peacetime was a pair of corduroy slacks and a zip-fastened jerkin; and his constant companions were two bull terriers.

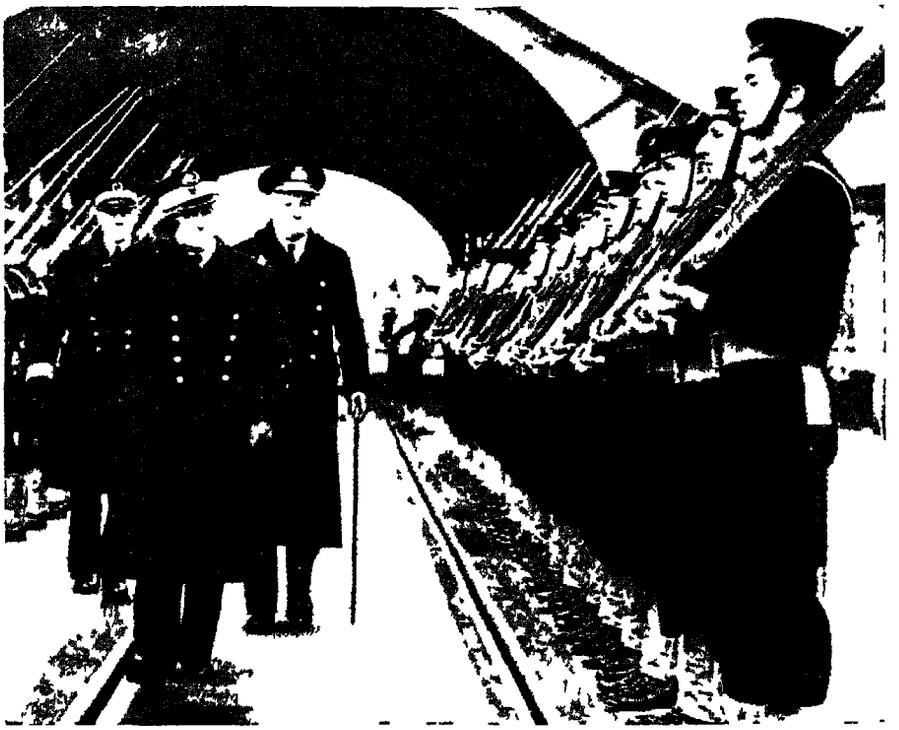
At 59 he was in his prime, ready to recall whatever might be applicable to the present from his vast store of knowledge and experience. "Tiny" or "Big Bill" Ironside always kept in touch with the careers of his junior officers, and thus



**ALLIED COMMANDERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

**Lieutenant-General Sir Archibald Wavell (left), Commander of the British Land Forces in the Middle East, is here seen in conversation with General Weygand, Commander-in-Chief of the French troops in the Levant. The photograph was taken during the staff talks which preceded the signing of the Anglo-French Treaty with Turkey.**

*Photo, "The Times"*



**FRENCH NAVAL C.-IN-C. VISITS ENGLAND**

**Admiral Darlan Commander-in-Chief of the French Navy, is seen inspecting a guard of honour at a British port. Behind him is Admiral Sir William James. Appointed Chief of the Naval Staff in 1936, Admiral Darlan was given command of the French naval forces on June 6, 1939**

*Photo, Planet News*

retained their loyalty and confidence. Equally had he the complete trust of the British people.

In September 1939, when the British Expeditionary Force first went overseas, two Corps Commanders were appointed —General Sir John Greer Dill and Lt.-General Alan Francis Brooke. Later a 3rd Corps was designated under Lt.-General Sir Ronald Forbes Adam. Of the three Sir John Dill was the only one whose name was at all familiar to the public, for it had come into prominence when from 1936 to 1937 he was G.O.C. in Palestine and Transjordan. In September 1939 Dill was G.O.C. Aldershot Command.

**Three Corps Commanders**

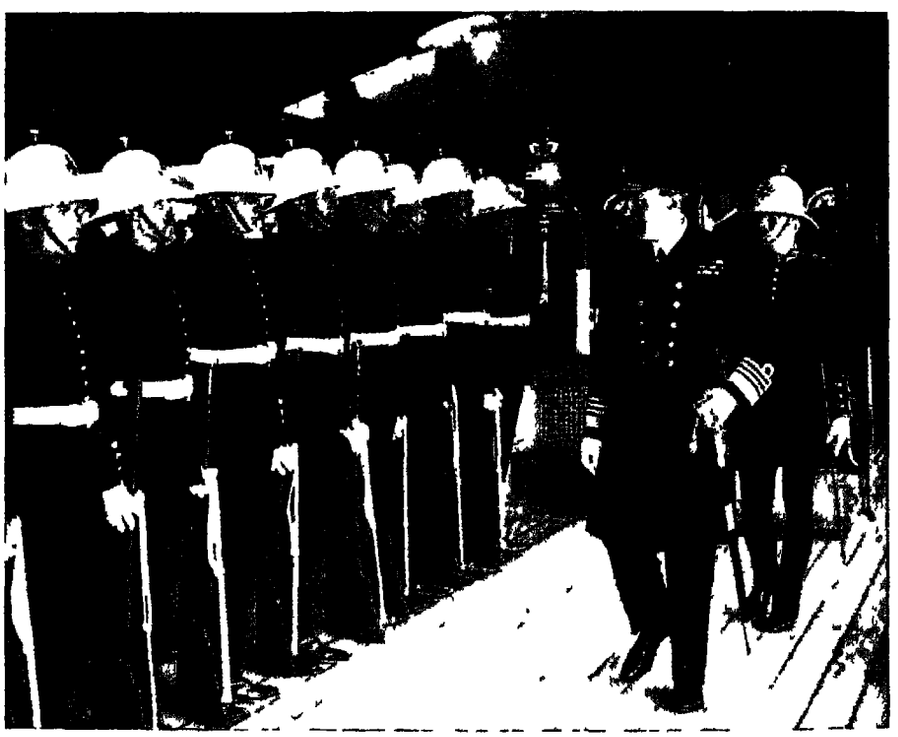
Dill, who was born in 1881, saw service in the Boer War as a subaltern in the Leinster Regiment, and at the outbreak of the First Great War was, like Ironside, a student at the Staff College. Practically his whole active service was spent on the Staff. He was familiar with the French army and its leaders, and infantrymen could well take comfort from the fact that their two senior commanders in the field were both foot soldiers who had in the past shared the greatest of the "foot-sloggers'" hazards and knew full well their inevitable hardships.

Gunners, on the other hand, contributed to leadership in Ironside and the 2nd Corps Commander, Lt.-General Brooke. Like Dill, Brooke is an Ulsterman of a famous family, who entered the Royal Artillery in 1902 and began his service in the Great War with the Indian Expeditionary Force. He was on the Staff throughout, serving for a year with the Canadian Corps. Two of his more recent appointments were Director of Military Training and Commander of the Mobile Division and of the Anti-Aircraft Corps.

Another leader of outstanding personality, Sir Ronald Adam, was in 1938 shot up over the heads of many major-generals to become Deputy Chief of Imperial General Staff. Sir Ronald was a regimental captain in 1914 and saw active service in France, Flanders and Italy, but he later became earmarked for rapid promotion. He was well known for his gift of penetrating comment and the posing of searching questions. He followed Lord Gort as Commandant of the Staff College.

It is interesting to note that Gort, Ironside, Dill and Adams were Commandants of the Staff College, and that Brooke had been an instructor there, which gave them exceptional knowledge of Staff Officers who later served them.

On his appointment as Corps Commander his place at the War Office as Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff was taken by Major-General H. R. S. Massy, D.S.O., M.C. He served during the war of 1914-18 in



**HOME FLEET'S C.-IN-C. ABOARD H.M.S. 'NELSON'**

**Admiral Sir Charles Forbes, D.S.O., seen above inspecting a guard of honour of Royal Marines, was present at the Battle of Jutland as Jellicoe's flag commander on the "Iron Duke," and was second in command of the "Queen Elizabeth" during the attack on the Dardanelles in 1915.**

*Photo, Wide World*

Gallipoli, Egypt and France. He received a commission in the R.F.A. in 1902, and later went to West Africa, (1907–11). When the First Great War broke out Massy was Adjutant to the 4th East Lancs Brigade, R.F.A. He served in India (1922–28), being Instructor at the Staff College, Quetta, from 1925. A colonel in 1932, he became Brigadier R.A. Southern Command two years later, holding this post until 1938, when he was promoted major-general and appointed Director of Military Training at the War Office. He was 55 when in 1939 he took up the post of Deputy C.I.G.S.

As Deputy Chief of General Staff Overseas Lord Gort took with him to France Major-General Philip Neame, V.C., D.S.O. General Neame's V.C. was won at Neuve Chapelle in December 1914 when he was serving as a lieutenant in the Royal Engineers. In 1938 he became Commandant, Royal Military Academy, Woolwich.

Another highly important appointment at the outbreak of hostilities was that of Lieut.-General Sir Archibald Wavell to the supreme command in the Middle East. General Wavell, who shares with Ironside and Dill the laurels of a Boer War veteran, had a varied experience in the war of 1914–18, acting as Liaison Officer with the Russians and ending as Brigadier-General on Sir Philip Chetwode's staff during Allenby's victorious campaign against the Turks. Latterly he was G.O.C. in Palestine and of the Southern Command. He was always known for his open-mindedness, unconventionality of outlook and ready receptivity of new ideas, qualities of great value in facing the strategic problems of the Eastern Mediterranean.

It is said that after the present war had been in progress for three months the question was posed to a company of intelligentsia—"Who is the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet?" Only one could answer correctly "Admiral Sir Charles Forbes," and he added the wise comment—"Better a man with a public reputation to make than one made for him by injudicious publicity." This is more especially true of the silent service, where any kind of public boosting is looked upon with horror and rather acts as an embarrassment than an encouragement.

Forbes's record, however, was of a character sufficiently impressive to bear stark repetition without adornment.

He entered the Navy in 1894 as a boy of 13, in the old wooden cadet ship "Britannia." In 1912 he was a commander, in 1917 a captain, in 1928 a rear-admiral, he became a vice-admiral in 1933 and an admiral in 1936. He was a specialist in gunnery, and his first important post in the war of 1914–18 was as second in command of the "Queen Elizabeth" under Admiral de Robeck during the attack on the Dardanelles.

Recalled to the Grand Fleet, he became Jellicoe's flag commander on board the "Iron Duke," and in this post was present at the Battle of Jutland, after which he was awarded the D.S.O. Jellicoe, in his dispatches, paid high tribute to his efficiency and helpfulness. From 1932 to 1931 Forbes was Third Sea Lord. After his promotion to Vice-Admiral he commanded the 1st Battle Squadron.

Slightly built, with keen blue eyes, Sir Charles could carry his 58 years with an air of youthfulness. He made his way up the ladder by merit and not



**CHIEF OF FIGHTER COMMAND**
**Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding (above) went to the R.F.C from the R.A. in 1914, and held various important commands**
*Photo, Vandyk*



**FIGHTING CHIEFS IN HAPPY MOOD**
**Above Air Chief Marshal Sir Cyril Newall (left), Chief of the Air Staff, is seen arriving at No. 10 Downing Street accompanied by Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound, the First Sea Lord.**
*Photo, Keystone*

influence, and through his forty odd years of service absorbed every lesson of experience. On shore his hobby and his pride had been his beautiful garden at Virginia Water. Already in September 1939 the country had to acknowledge the efficiency of two mobilizations of the Fleet, one in the previous September during the Czech crisis and the other at the outbreak of war, for both of which Sir Charles Forbes was responsible.

At the Admiralty the First Sea Lord was Admiral Sir Dudley Pound, an old sea-dog of proved worth in battle and in peacetime, who had entered the Navy in 1891 and who in 1914 had been commander of the "St. Vincent." At Jutland he commanded the "Colossus," of which ship he was captain for two years. When Chief of Staff to Sir Roger Keyes in the Mediterranean, in 1926, he was promoted to flag rank, and to this command he himself succeeded in 1935. Pound is said in many ways to have resembled Beatty in his belief in the initiative and the offensive. At the Admiralty in his early days he was a pupil of Fisher. Very poor

lower deck, with a breezy, barking manner, he was always blessed with foresight and wisdom. Four years previously, when pleading for more capital ships, he had prophesied, "In two or three years there is going to be a hell of a fight."

As opposite number to Sir Charles Forbes, the French Navy had as commander-in-chief Admiral Darlan, a roving sailor from Nérac in Gascony—a man of precise orders *light-hearted, optimistic* and immensely loved and trusted by his men. It was typical of him during the war of 1914–18, when fighting on land seemed to offer the more immediately exciting employment, that he had volunteered for it and was given command of a naval battery, with which he saw service in France (on the Somme and at Verdun) and at Salonika. His post-war employments were all highly important, and he reached the highest command in 1936

**France's Sea Command**

Only second to the Navy in courting obscurity is the Royal Air Force, but it had at the outbreak of war two great leaders, who, amongst a galaxy of talent, held the highest posts and upon whom the security of the country so vitally depended. Both Air Chief Marshal Sir Cyril Newall and Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding were soldiers who had joined the R.F.C. at the beginning of the war of 1914–18.

Sir Cyril Newall, Chief of the Air Staff, was born in India in 1886. He was commissioned to the Royal Warwickshire Regiment and afterwards to the 2nd K.E.O. Gurkha Rifles. In 1911, as a Lieutenant, he learnt to fly at his own expense, and shortly after the outbreak of war joined the R.F.C. In September 1915 he was commanding No. 12 Squadron, which he took to France. On active service he won the Albert Medal for a deed of extraordinary gallantry, when with the help of three others he put out a fire in a store in which 2,000 high explosive bombs were housed.

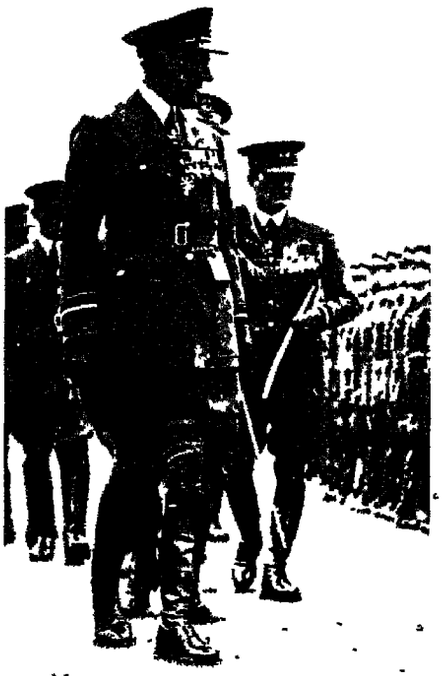
His progress after the war was gradual but inevitable, until he became Chief of Air Staff in 1937.

The formation of a separate R.A.F. Command to include all units of the Force in France was announced on January 9, 1940. This Command, known as the "British Air Forces in France," was entrusted to Air Marshal A. S. Barratt, C.B., C.M.G., M.C., who became responsible, in consultation with the Army commanders-in-chief concerned, for ensuring the most effective support by the British Air Forces for the B.E.F. and the French armies on the Western Front. In collaboration with General Vuillemin he was also charged with co-ordinating the operations of the British and French Air Forces in France.

There are three other chief executive commands in the Air Force—the Fighter Command, the Bomber Command, and the Coastal Command. The Air Officer commanding-in-chief the first of these was Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding. His command included the fighter aircraft, the A.A. guns, the searchlights, the barrage balloons and the Observer Corps. He, too, had learnt to fly before the war of 1914–18. When as a gunner subaltern he joined the R.F.C. he was entrusted with the development of wireless communication between aircraft and batteries.

The commander-in-chief of the Bomber Command and the Coastal Command are respectively Air Chief Marshal Sir Edgar Ludlow-Hewitt and Air Marshal Sir Frederick Bowhill. Sir Edgar was also in the R.F.C. in 1914 and was awarded the D.S.O. and M.C Sir Frederick is an old "Worcester" cadet who, after service in the R.N.R., joined the R.N A.S. and commanded a seaplane squadron in the German East campaign—winning the D.S.O. and bar.

For 14 months before the present war the French Air Force had been commanded by General Vuillemin, who in 1914–18 established his reputation as a fighting ace. By June 1916 he had fought 40 battles, and on one occasion fought single-handed with five German Albatros machines. He was mentioned in dispatches. During the intervening period he earned a high reputation both as a leader in the air and as an administrator. On one occasion he led a flight of 30 military aeroplanes over 15,000 miles of desert. In rebuilding the French air power he showed the greatest firmness and persistence.



**CHIEF OF BOMBER COMMAND**

Air Chief Marshal Sir Edgar Ludlow-Hewitt, D.S.O., M.C., served with the Royal Flying Corps in 1914. He was six times mentioned in dispatches. In 1935 he was appointed to command the R.A.F. in India

*Photo, L.N.A.*



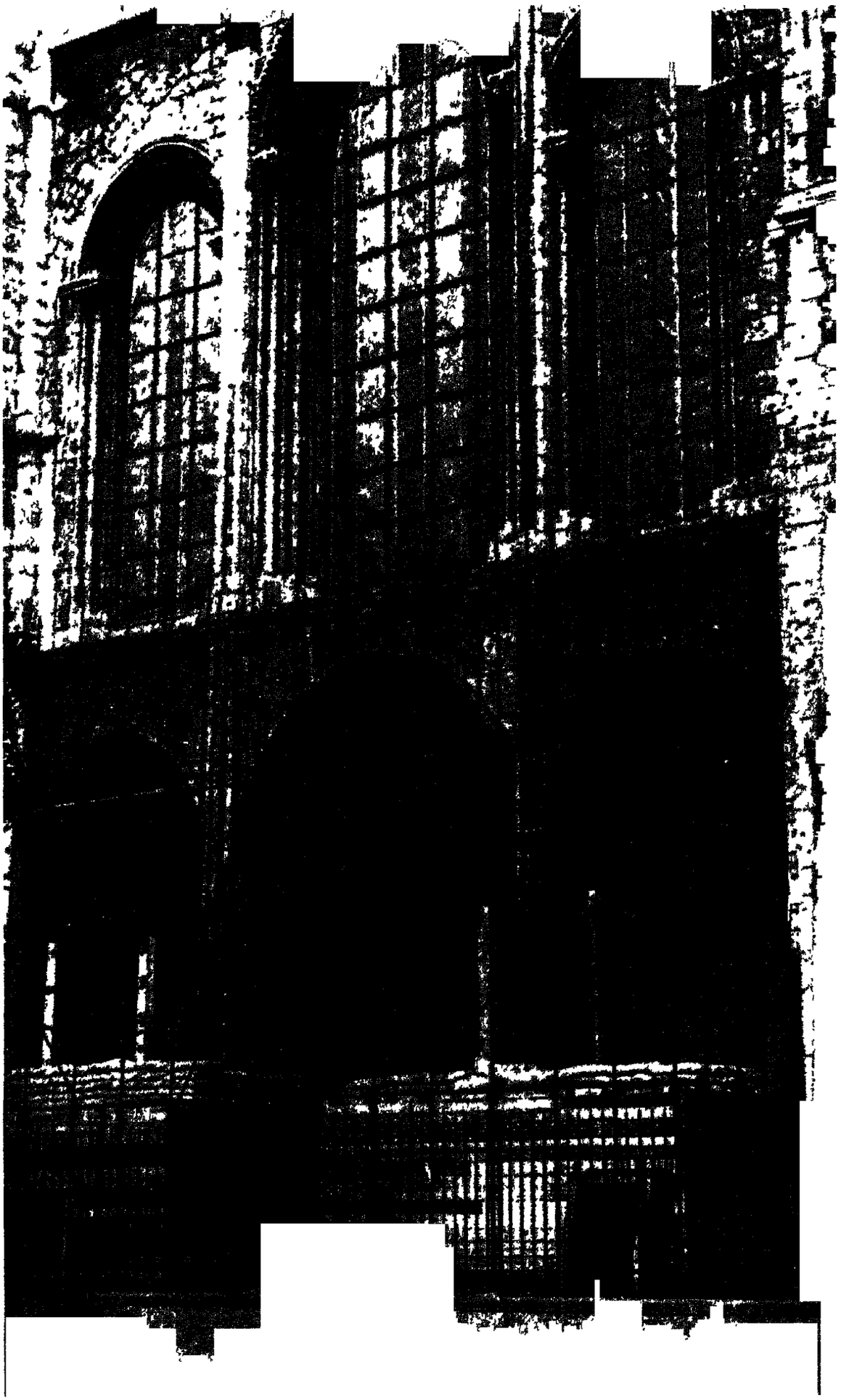
**CHIEF OF COASTAL COMMAND**

Air Marshal Sir Frederick Bowhill, D.S.O., served with the R.N.A.S. in the 1914-18 war, and was mentioned six times in dispatches He began his career as an officer in the Merchant Service.



**FRENCH AIR CHIEF**

General Vuillemin, C.-in-C. of the French Air Force, holds a high place in the ranks of French air aces of 1914-18 Originally an artillery officer, he transferred to the air service when it was still in its infancy.



## FRANCE GUARDS HER PRICELESS TREASURES

The famous Gothic cathedral of Notre Dame at Chartres, 55 miles S.W. of Paris, is one of the finest in the world and was built in the 13th century. It is renowned for its lovely stained-glass windows, and in order that they should not be damaged by air raids, they were removed on the outbreak of war and replaced, as shown in this photograph, by oiled paper. Note, too, the sandbag protection being built in front of the sculptured doorways.

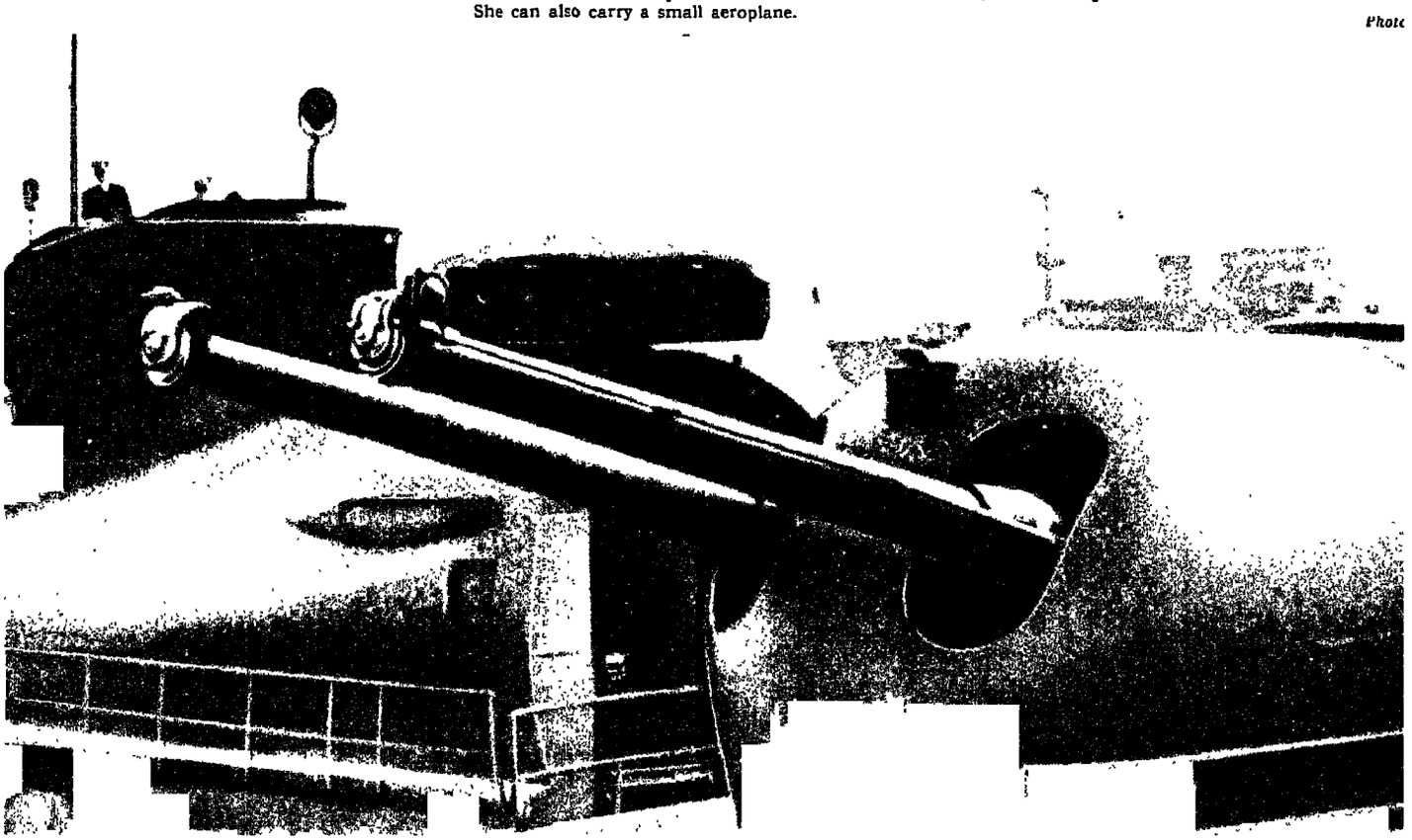
*Photo, Renée Gesmar*



## OUR ALLY'S POWERFUL SUBMARINE CRUISER

Below is a close-up view of France's giant submarine "Surcouf." With a surface displacement of nearly 3,000 tons, a length of 350 feet and an armament which includes the two 8-inch guns seen in the photograph, the "Surcouf" is almost as much a cruiser as a submarine. She has ten torpedo tubes and carries a normal complement of 150 men. She can also carry a small aeroplane.

Photo

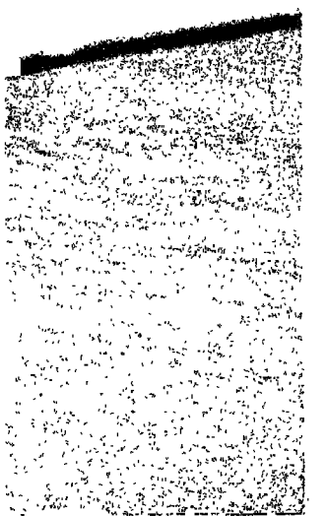


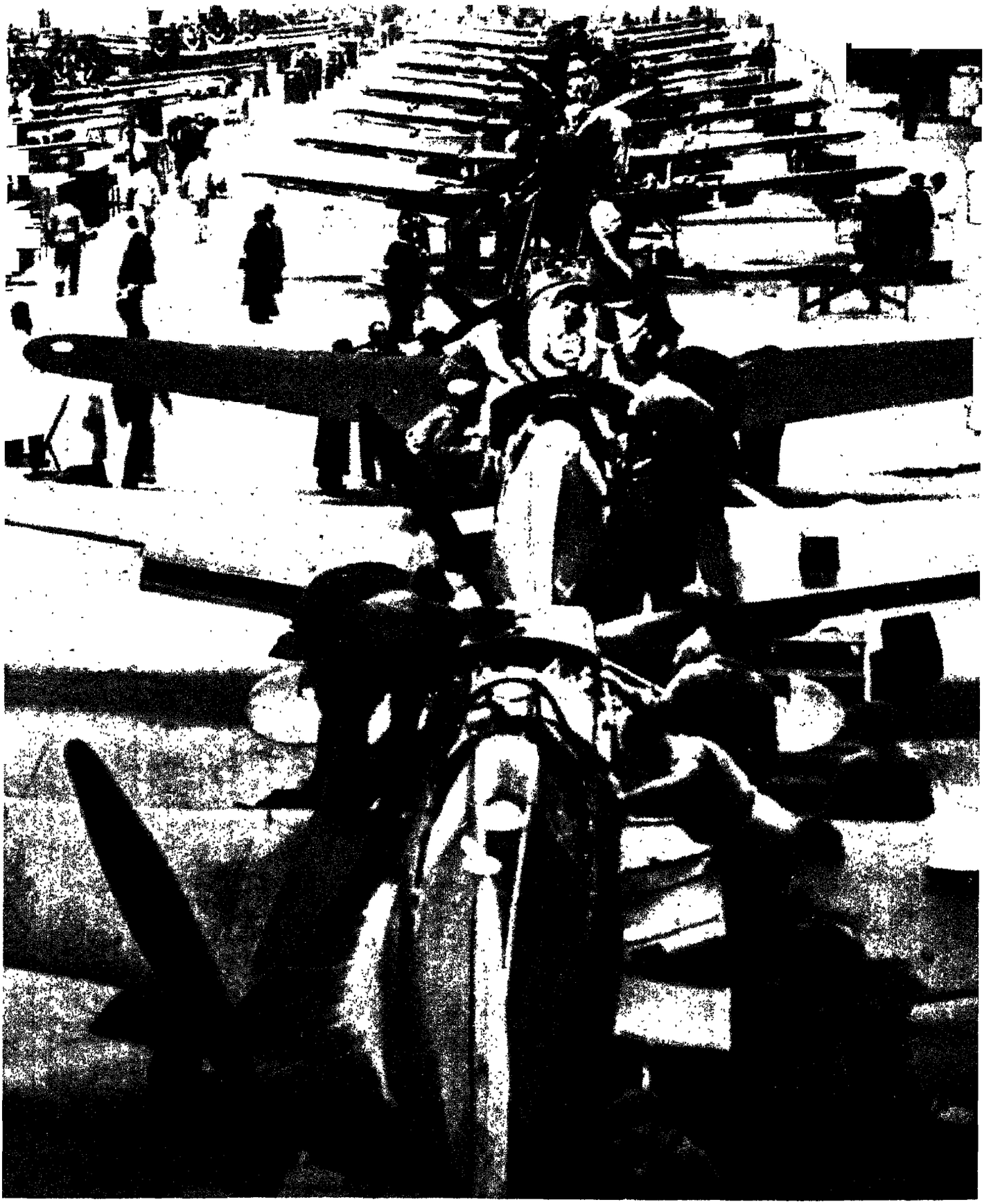


## GLIMPSES OF THE NAVAL POWER OF FRANCE

**The upper photograph in the opposite page shows a French seaplane flying over destroyers which are throwing out a heavy smoke screen. Below is a modern French cruiser, the "Algérie," a vessel of 10,000 tons displacement, armed with eight 8-inch guns. She carries no fewer then 28 anti-aircraft guns, twelve 4-inch and sixteen 1·45-inch, and, in addition, has sixteen heavy machine-guns. One of the anti-aircraft guns is seen in the foreground of the photograph below.**

*Photos, Service Cinématographique de la Marine ; "I'n"*





**HIGH-SPEED MAKING OF FRENCH FIGHTER 'PLANES**

Here is a scene in a French aircraft factory where single-seater fighters are being turned out at high speed. In 1937 most of the French industrial works connected with the aeroplane industry were grouped in six Sociétés Régionales, and a decentralization of factories took place so as to render them less vulnerable to mass air attacks. The machines seen above are the famous Morane-Saulnier fighters.

*Photo, Agence Trampus*

Chapter 32

# CZECHOSLOVAKIA UNDER THE NAZI HEEL: A PURGATORY OF OPPRESSION

*A Justly Proud Democracy—Munich Betrayal and the Seizure of Bohemia and Moravia—The Czech 'Black Hand'—Brave but Futile Revolt of September 1939—Czechs Celebrate Independence Day—Frank and the Sudeten Bullies—Neutral Observer's Story—Massacre of the Students*

For twenty years Czechoslovakia was a member of the family of nations; for twenty years the little country had her place in the map, stretching across the heart of Europe from the mountains of Bohemia to the Carpathian foothills in Ruthenia. During those two decades her people, blessed with the gifts of industry and courage, developed a national estate which Nature had endowed with no niggard hand. Both at home and abroad her statesmen sought peace and ensued it. Far beyond the confines of the Continent her fame went forth, and everywhere, by men who prized freedom and lived by tolerance and reason, this at least of the Succession States born of the collapsing Austro-Hungarian realm was hailed as one of the few worth-while products of the Great War.

So proud was her bearing, indeed, so splendid her achievement, so encouraging to all who held by democratic forms and breathed the democratic spirit, that those fit only to be tyrants and the slaves of tyrants were put to shame. In their hearts the seeds of envy and hate grew and multiplied, until the time came when the Totalitarian sea could not endure this little island of liberty set in its midst. Gradually the distant storm muttered and grew near, until at last it broke in the shriekings of a megalomaniac, the babble of diplomats, the tramp of armed legions, the rumble of tanks, the crash of volleys behind prison walls. Czechoslovakia died because, being free, she was no safe neighbour for a country of "yes-men," a nation of spies and the spied on.

**Haven of Freedom**

This is not the place to tell the story of the Czechoslovak crisis of 1938. Suffice it to say that at the Munich Conference of September 30 the dismemberment of the little country was decreed, and her strong, completely prepared defences were handed over to Germany. For a few months the rump state staggered along beneath a giant load of difficulties. Then, on March 13 of the following year, the German armies marched in overwhelming force to take advantage of a situation deliberately worked up by Nazi agents. At 3.55 a.m. on March 15 President Hacha, in Herr Hitler's office in Berlin, signed away his country's independence, having been told that unless he did so without delay 800 German aeroplanes would blast Prague into nothingness. At 6 a.m. on March 15 the German troops occupied Bohemia and Moravia, and thirteen hours later Hitler himself entered Prague. Once again he had bullied his way to victory; he did not know it then, but history will recall that this was his last major triumph. The Ides of March, as Mr. Harold Nicolson has written, the seizure of Prague, came as such a profound shock to British opinion that "in twelve hours the great majority of people in England realized that the policy of appeasement had failed completely." From that realization proceeded in due course the Peace Front, the resolve to stand by Poland, the declaration of war on September 3.

When war came Czechoslovakia was a prisoner. A year before, when war had threatened, the enemies of the Nazi power had relied on Czechoslovakia as constituting a bulwark thrust into the very heart of the foe. Now, as a result of a year's diplomatic manœuvrings, of chicanery and bullying, of underground conspiracy and open suppression, she was enclosed within the armed circle of her devourer. However ardently the majority of the Czech people might hope and long for the victory of the Allies, they could do little to further its advent. Whereas on the earlier occasion they might have proffered guns and fortresses, 'planes and men, now they could but shake their shackles in fuming impotence.

**The Republic Encircled**

Armed revolt on a large scale was, of course, out of the question; the Nazis



FORCED TO CAPITULATE TO THE REICH

Dr. Emil Hacha, a distinguished international jurist, was elected President of Czechoslovakia on November 30, 1938, following the resignation of Dr. Benes. Early on March 15, 1939, faced with Nazi threats to bomb Prague, Dr. Hacha was compelled to surrender to Hitler.

*Photo, Keystone*




**RELUCTANCE!**

*From the cartoon by Zec, courtesy of the "Daily Mirror"*

saw to that by spreading their spy net work throughout the country and by occupying every place of importance with numbers of heavily-armed troops. Many years ago Engels pointed out that an insurrection of the street-fighting and barricade type was out of date when the streets have been laid out long and straight, and the military are numerous, well-armed and firmly disciplined. Only when, as in Russia in 1917, the soldiers join the people in revolt is success at all probable. In Prague, in the autumn of 1939, military support was not to be expected when the garrison was made up of aliens, men of a different race and speaking a different tongue; men, moreover, whose interest was bound up with the maintenance of their position in the midst of a vast hostile populace.

But though for the time being the Czechs submitted to the conqueror, they never attempted to conceal their hatred, to veil their contempt. Some of the young German levies were horribly aggrieved when they found that swagger and smart uniforms were not the passport to the consideration of the Czech maidens. In every way and at every opportunity the Germans were made to feel that they were beyond the pale. They were boycotted. Czechs refused to buy in German shops, and got up and left the cafés as soon as German customers appeared in the doorway. They professed to be quite incapable of understanding the German tongue, and when in the German-controlled factory or munition works something went wrong with the machinery — and the machines operated by the Czechs always seemed to be going wrong — the culprits smiled at every question, shook their heads helplessly at every reproof, and at every curse returned always the same reply. "Sorry, don't know German."

**Passive Resistance**

During the six months that elapsed between the proclamation of the Protectorate and the opening of the war with Poland the relation between the Czechs and their oppressors grew steadily worse For the most part the Czechs maintained an admirable sang-froid, and they soon proved that ridicule was a powerful weapon in their armoury. They roared with laughter when the Nazi tanks and mechanized transport refused to start after they had once halted in a great procession in Prague: they booed as well when the drivers and mechanics had to set about the emptying of petrol tanks filled by onlookers with water, milk, sugar, and even raw eggs.... They smiled to one another when, on the day on which the receipts of Prague's transport system were declared to be reserved for the Nazi Winter Relief Fund, they all walked to work with their "seasons" tucked ostentatiously in their hatbands, or gaily rode through the streets in taxis. They grinned when things went wrong in the workshops, when the Nazi officials blundered or were nonplussed, when they badgered them with requests for assistance in the filling up of "forms."

It was not always a matter of smiles, however, or even jeers. Patriotic organizations, driven underground by the Gestapo, continued to exist and, when occasion offered, hit—and hit hard. If report spoke true, many an unfortunate Nazi was made to pay the price of his Fuehrer's treachery and dropped in his tracks with a cracked skull or a dagger in his back. When the war began and the black-outs came into being, these nocturnal assassinations became more frequent, and the Czechs' "Black Hand" came to be spoken of with dread by the members of the garrison

**'Ensuring Peace'**

Foundry workers at Kladno openly declared that at the first favourable opportunity they would throw their German overseers into the furnaces. Peasant women were said to keep a knife sharp ready for the day of reckoning. To add still further to the contents of the devil's cauldron, Communist agents were believed to be busy preparing and distributing pamphlets in which the German-Soviet Pact was pictured as a move by Stalin to check German expansion in the Balkans.

On the day the Germans marched to attack Poland they arrested some eight hundred Czech notables in Prague, and throughout the Protectorate five thousand persons were believed to have been clapped into gaol. S.S. and S.A detachments, supported by soldiers, guarded every railway station, bridge, post office and town hall, machine guns were mounted in Prague, and soldiers and Black Guards were marched through the streets with a view to cowing the populace. Groups of three persons were requested to disperse by the police. Letters were opened as a matter of course; everywhere there were spies, informers, and, so it transpired, *agents provocateurs*. Bohemia and Moravia were tyrannized over by gangs of bandits and bullies in uniform



**SLOVAK FOE OF THE NAZIS**

**The German annexation of Czechoslovakia was not entirely unopposed, and in September, 1939, revolutionary movements broke out. Dr. Karl Sidor (above), a Slovak patriot, waged guerilla warfare against the Nazis in the mountains of the Upper Tatra**

*Photo Associated Press*

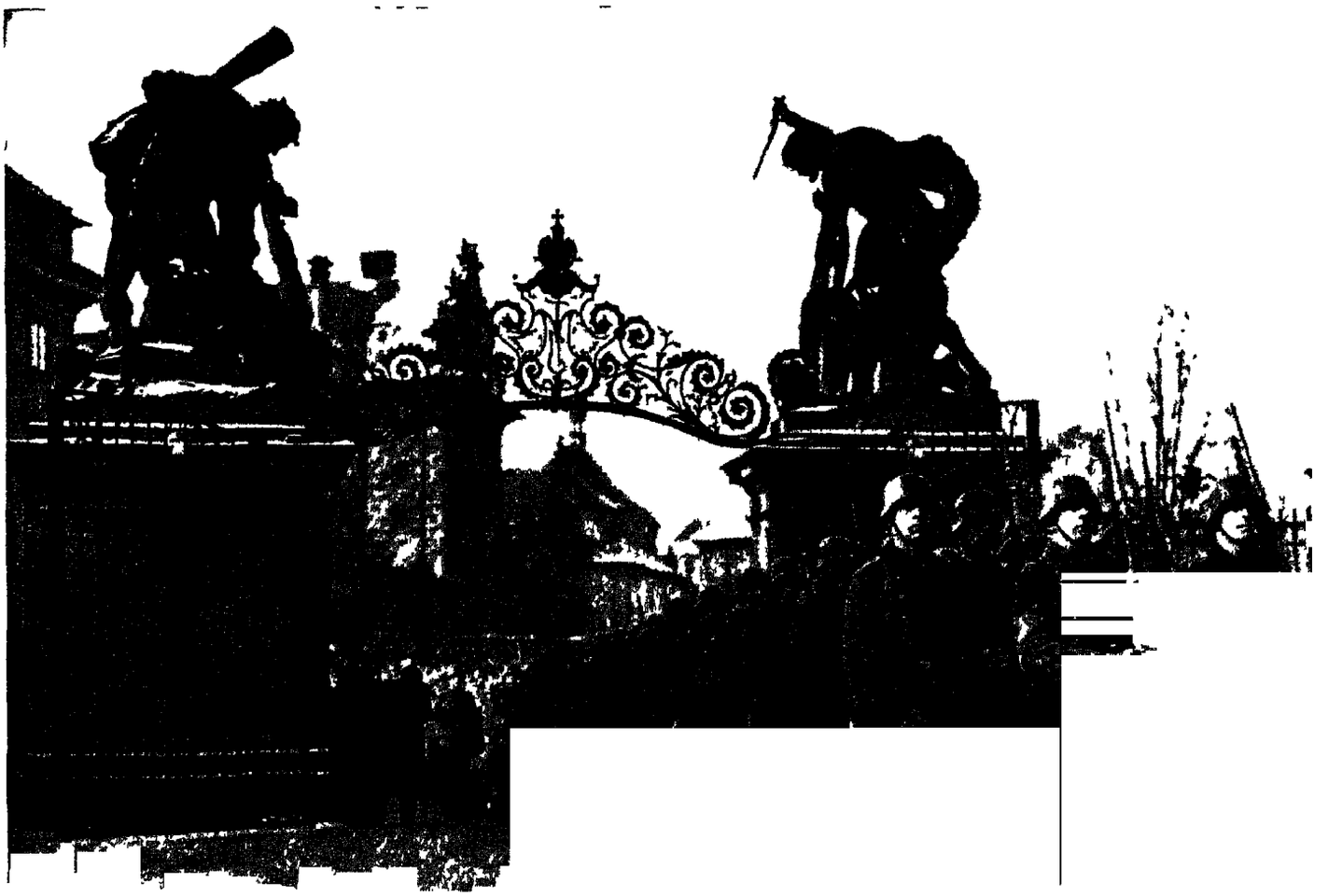




**NAZIS OCCUPY PRAGUE'S HISTORIC CASTLE**

In this page are scenes from the Nazi annexation of Czechoslovakia in March, 1939. Above, Hitler is looking down upon his handiwork from a window in the Hradcany, the historic castle of Prague—residence of the ancient kings of Bohemia. On the right, he is seen in a room of the castle listening to General Keitel, the Reichswehr commander, making his report. Below, Nazi troops entering the Hradcany

*Photos, International Graphic Press*



Small wonder that some amongst the Czechs broke out into something not far removed from insurrection. In the middle of September the newspapers of the world carried stories of a great revolt by the Czechs against their oppressors. It began—so the account ran—on Sunday, September 17, in Bohemia, Moravia and Western Slovakia, and despite repressive measures of the most severe and brutal kind, undertaken by vastly superior forces, it went on for several days before the unrest was once more driven underground. Bridges were blown up, railway rolling stock damaged, workshops bombed and machinery sabotaged. There were clashes between troops and civilians; Czech garrisons were said to have revolted and thousands of men had been disarmed. There was fighting in the streets of Prague, in which even women had taken a grimly effective part. As a result of these widespread disturbances thousands had been arrested, hundreds shot. . . .

**Revolt in Bohemia**

In the light of later communications it would seem that the scale and nature of the movement were exaggerated. The responsible heads of the Czechs were hardly likely to countenance a revolt by a practically unarmed people against an enemy possessed of unbounded supplies of arms and occupying all the strategic points. However deep and bitter their hatred, they could not be blind to the fact that an open insurrection would play directly into the hands of the Nazi oppressor. But if—as may well be hoped—the imprisonments and the executions were not on the scale originally alleged, there can be no doubt that, even so early in the war, the Nazis in Czechoslovakia were faced with a situation suddenly rendered dangerous as well as difficult. While still undefeated in the field they would undoubtedly continue to hold down the conquered populace, but the incidents now reported were suggestive of what might be expected when the Nazi regime began to crack.

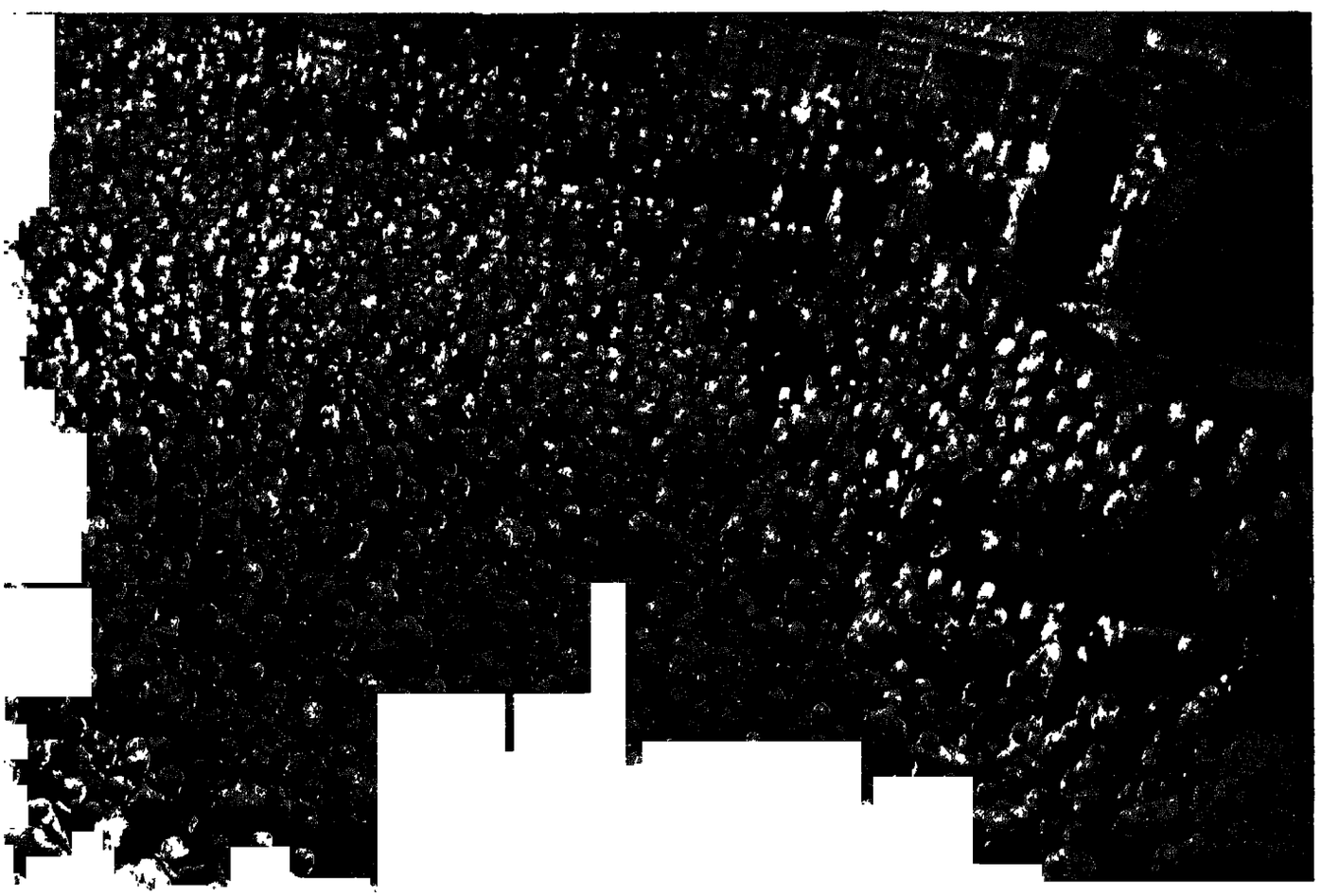
Another month or so passed. The friction increased, discontent grew, passive resistance assumed ever new forms. October 28 drew near, the twenty-first anniversary of the day on which Czechoslovakia achieved her independence. Since 1918 the day had been kept as one of national rejoicing, coupled with commemoration of the nation's dead heroes. Even in 1938, when the bitterness of Munich was still fresh, the ceremonies traditionally associated with the day were observed; and it was resolved that in 1939, though the puppet of a foreign conqueror now sat in the room of Masaryk and Benes, and though no national holiday would be permitted, Independence Day should not be allowed to pass unhonoured. It was given out that the workers were to attend their factories in their Sunday best and that school-children should do the same; shopping was to be avoided as much as possible; black ties were to be worn, hats carried; the day should be spent, as in years gone by, in visiting the national monuments and the tombs of the heroic dead; at night, blinds were to be undrawn, curtains pulled back, so that the light of the unshaded lamps should stream out into the streets, as is the way of Czechs in mourning. These were the arrangements decided upon by the Czech leaders.

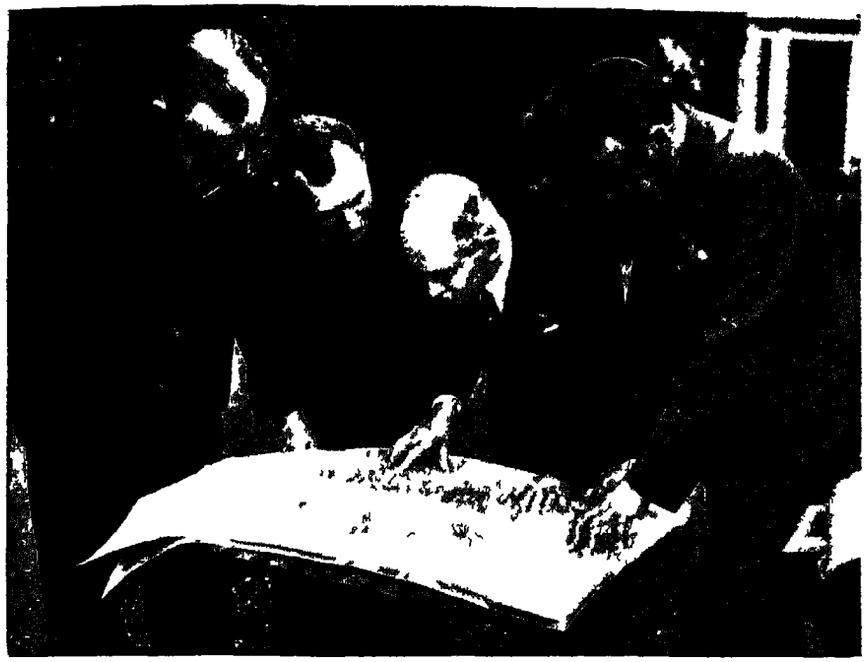
The day dawned, and early in the morning processions of workers formed

**CZECHS DEMONSTRATE IN PRAGUE**

**After the annexation of Czechoslovakia the Nazis rigorously put down any manifestations of patriotism. But on October 28, 1939, the twenty-first anniversary of Czechoslovakia's Independence Day, there were many demonstrations, and in scuffles between Czechs and Germans many were injured and arrested. Below, a students' demonstration in the Vaclavske Namesti.**

*Photo, Planet News*





**FOUNDERS OF THE CZECH LEGION** *Photo, Keystone*

**The Czechs, like the Poles, formed an independent army in France to fight with the Allied forces against Germany. Above are seen (left to right) Colonel Moraveo; General Serge Inger (organizing the Czech Independent Army in France and England); Dr. Benes, ex-President of Czechoslovakia; and General Rudolf Viest.**

and marched to the central quarter of Prague, where they held a demonstration. The Czech police had the situation well in hand. Indeed, there was no suggestion of disorder—until a band of Sudeten German youths got up a quarrel with Czechs wearing the tricolour and those peaked caps which were always worn by old President Masaryk. There was a scuffle as the badges were snatched at and caps knocked off. Immediately a number of German armoured cars swept into the streets—they had obviously been kept in readiness for just such an engineered fracas as this—and in a few minutes dozens of the crowd were laid out. Hundreds were arrested and many more taken injured to the hospitals or prison. One of the big banks was made into a temporary reception station by the police, and the cries of the prisoners who were being maltreated within attracted the attention of the crowd, and so aroused the disgust and horror of the Czech police that they could hardly be restrained from making an entrance with a view to putting a stop to the atrocities.

**Scuffle Leads to Massacre**

Meanwhile, crowds were assembling and demonstrating in peaceful fashion in other streets of the central zone, particularly in Wenceslas Square and outside the church of St. Mary-in-the-Snow, where they sang the Czech national anthem with patriotic fervour. But as evening drew on tempers began to rise. There were some fierce encounters between the rival factions, particularly in the little park on Karlovo Namesti, and State Secretary Frank and his gang of Sudeten *agents provocateurs* got involved in, or started, a mêlée in which revolvers, whips and rifle butts were brought into effective action. Several passers-by were shot, and a number more were taken to hospital suffering from revolver wounds. In all, seventeen Czechs were reported to have been killed, and some 3,500 arrested.

Shots were heard at intervals during the night, but by dawn the last of the demonstrators had gone home, and the week's work began. President Hacha protested a day or so later against the nefarious activities of Frank, and in this action he was supported by the whole of the Czech Government. The German Protector, Baron von Neurath, former Foreign Secretary of the Reich, proffered an apology and gave a promise that there should be no further retaliations. But Frank and his Sudeten bullies had attained what was most probably their object—the postponement to an indefinite future of any moderation of the German policy of repression. By stirring up trouble Frank encouraged those in Hitler's entourage who argued that the only argument to use with Czechs was force.

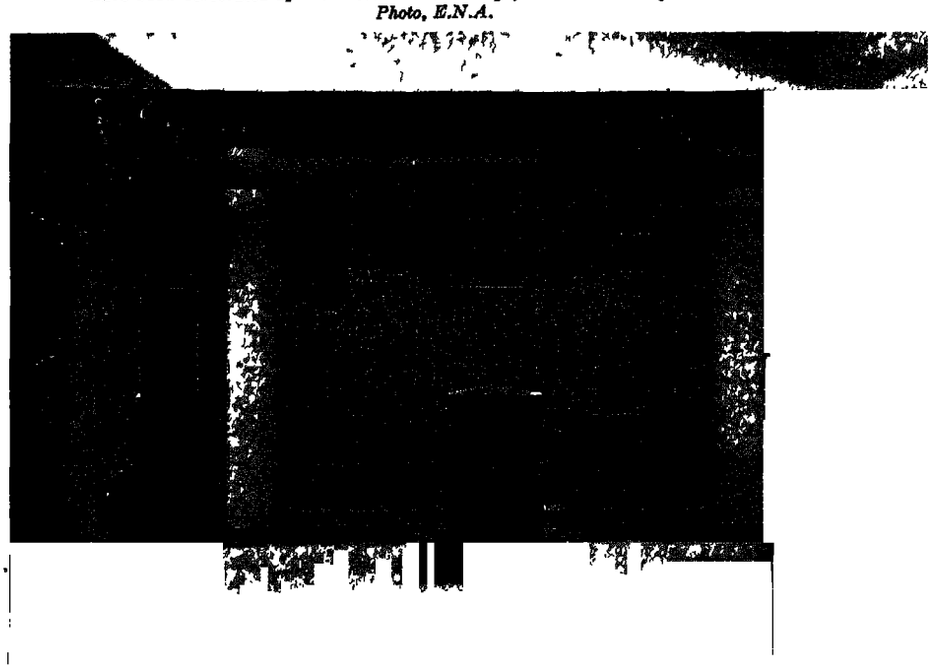
Fortunately for the outside world, Mr. Oswald Villard, a neutral observer of impeccable reliability, was in Prague at the time of the disturbances just reviewed, and he wrote for the "Daily Telegraph" (afterwards published by Constable & Co., Ltd.) a vivid account of what he saw and felt. Mr. Villard, one of the most distinguished American journalists, welcomed the suggestion that he should go to the Czech city to see for himself how quiet and happy was the Czechoslovakia Protectorate and how readily the Czechs were accepting the fine and efficient German rule in place of the "rotten and corrupt" government of President Benes. He received the necessary permission, no doubt

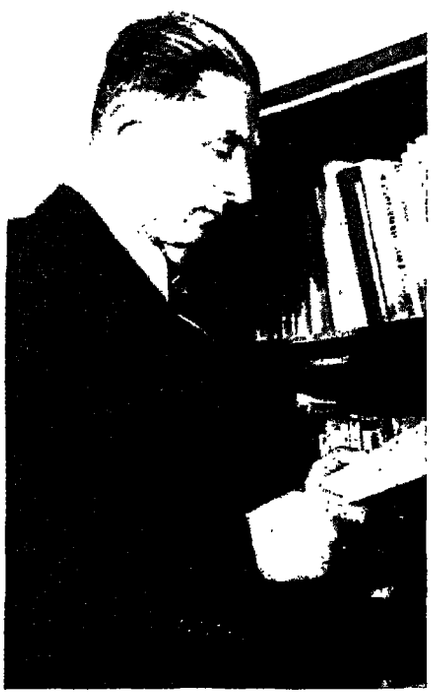
**Neutral's Impressions**

**IN THE PANTHEON OF PRAGUE**

**Below is the tomb of President Masaryk in the Pantheon, or National Monument of Liberation, at Prague, which holds many relics and documents sacred to all Czechs. It was reported to have been desecrated by members of the Gestapo, who smashed up the exhibits.**

*Photo, E.N.A.*





**NAZI MINISTER OF PERSECUTION**

**Above, Karl Hermann Frank, State Secretary for the German Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Often described as "Nazi Bully No. 1," Frank was responsible for the reign of terror which followed the German annexation of Czechoslovakia.**

*Photo, International Graphic Press*

because it was believed that "everything was going beautifully in Prague and that it would be a very good thing to have me say so on my return." Unfortunately for the plan, wrote Mr. Villard, "I chose the wrong day to arrive in Prague—October 28, the natal day of the destroyed Republic. So far from the city being peaceful it was the very contrary. There were great crowds in the streets, all wearing the Republic's colours, and by lunch-time it was evident that serious things were likely to happen, for shots had by then been fired in the air. From the beginning the attitude of the S.S. and S.A. men was provocative.

"In Prague, as in Vienna after the Anschluss, the Germans made the mistake of organizing in the S.A. and S.S. young local Nazis who went swaggering around, puffed up by their new uniforms and power, and proceeded to vent their grudges and spite. These were the men responsible for the bloodshed on October 28, I have no doubt. I saw one demonstrator being forced into a police lorry after being brutally beaten up. That might and does happen in many places, but what impressed me was seeing a young Brown Shirt running at a perfectly unoffending crowd, brandishing a revolver in a most reckless and threatening manner." The Czech police, so far as Mr. Villard observed and heard, were perfectly correct in their behaviour (although he wondered that any Czechs could be got to do their work), but he could not help feeling that if efficient British or American police had been on the job, the day would have passed without any disturbance to speak of, and certainly no killing. "It remains to add," he went on," that the S.S. men who did the killings used a very interesting new technique. They shot obliquely at the side-walk so that the bullets ricocheted up into the crowd. That enabled them to say that they were 'so sorry' these 'accidents' had happened. Had they not been careful to shoot at the ground and not at the people?"

Among the victims of the shooting on October 28 was a Czech medical student of twenty-two, one Jan Opletal, and on November 15 his funeral was made the occasion for another great demonstration of national feeling. Thousands of his fellow-students assembled in procession and marched beside the bier, funeral flares were lit, defiant speeches delivered before the Czech Unknown Warrior's Tomb, and Czech and Slovak anthems sung to the tune of cries of "Death to the Murderers!" and "Long Live Liberty!" Czech police kept the crowds on the move, but the Nazi Black Guards, arriving in lorries and on motor bicycles, acted with characteristic brutality. After dispersing the crowds, troopers and gendarmerie made a search of the University buildings and arrested a number of students, whom they carried away to their headquarters in lorries.

Following the arrests there were shootings. A statement issued by the German News Agency on November 17 read: "A group of Czech intellectuals, which is in touch with ex-President Benes, has for some considerable time tried to disturb public order in the Protectorate by minor and major acts of resistance. It has been possible to establish that such incidents have occurred, particularly in the Czech universities. The closing down of the Czech universities for a period of three years has been decided upon because these elements made attacks on Germans on October 28 and November 15."

After this announcement Prague became a city of the dead. Czechs kept away from the usual centres of concourse, and stayed at home as much as possible by way of mute protest against their oppressors' brutality. The German authorities, however, had no hesitation in attempting to justify their action. "The measures were taken by the Government of the Protectorate," said a Berlin spokesman, "in agreement with Baron von Neurath, the Reich Protector. In the present situation it was impossible for Germany to allow the Czech people to be contaminated by a few hotheads. It is quite possible that similar occurrences may take place in the occupied parts of Poland. In peacetime Germany would be most lenient in the case of such happenings. But under circumstances as serious as the present we have no choice but to crush relentlessly any such currents."

For a few days the Nazis acted as if they were garrisoning a city on the eve of revolt. The University was occupied by armed police and Nazi guards, and so, too, were all the Czech societies of one kind or another. Five thousand Nazi guards were rushed to the city on motor-cycles and in armoured cars, and another five thousand were brought in later. Two thousand students and many professors were arrested, and of these only 800 were released after interrogation. Some of the students were taken away to the ill-famed concentration camp at Buchenwald, near Weimar.

Three more Czechs—two of them police officers—were shot by the Germans in Prague on November 18; they were said to have attacked a Nazi guard



**'PROTECTOR' OF THE CZECHS**

**Baron von Neurath (above) was at one time German Ambassador in London. On March 18, 1939, he was appointed by Hitler Reich Protector of the newly constituted Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, with his official seat in Prague.**

*Photo, International Graphic Press*





## LIFE IN THE NEW GERMAN PROTECTORATES

On the left is a Sunday morning scene on the famous 14th-century Charles Bridge in Prague, taken in November, 1939, after the former Republic of Czechoslovakia had been annexed by the Nazis. Above, a young uniformed Nazi grins at the impassive face of a Czech policeman. The German caption to this photograph was "A Friendly Conversation". Judging from the Czech's expression it must have been a one-sided one! Below left, the village of Ratzerdorf, in so-called independent Slovakia; the swastika must be flown with the Slovak national flag. Below right, a newspaper seller in Prague.

*Photos, International Graphic Press and from "Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung"*





while engaged in the execution of his duties. This, the Nazi authorities now admitted, made twelve executions, but it was widely believed that the real number was very much larger. On the same day martial law was proclaimed in Prague.

After the executions von Neurath issued a proclamation to the Czech people reminding them how often they had been warned against having anything to do with those who acknowledged the leadership of Benes, and in the evening President Hacha was brought to the microphone from his sick bed to broadcast an address to his people. After saying that the events of the last few days had put in jeopardy the status given to the Protectorate by the Fuehrer on March 16, he attributed the anti-German disturbances to "infatuated elements" who were under the influence of hostile propaganda. The Czech people, he went on, had been incorporated in Germany's "living space," and it must be understood that Germany was now at war and justified in taking all the measures deemed necessary for victory. Moreover, the Czechs had been spared the horrors of war and the destruction which had befallen the Poles; they were in a position to live their lives in peace and hence were in a happier situation than many neutrals. He concluded with an appeal for the maintenance of law and order. Any resistance, he indicated, must have unpredictable consequences for the nation as well as for the individuals concerned.

**Nazi 'Justice'**

Shortly after the making of this feeble essay in justification it was announced that the President had left Prague and his resignation was rumoured. So dangerous was the situation felt to be that the number of Nazi guards and storm troopers still concentrated in Prague was believed to be some 20,000. Brutalities of the most shocking kind continued to be reported, and the special courts set up under the proclamation of martial law were empowered to pass the death sentence for murder, sabotage, and (ominous inclusion) resistance to authority. Amongst the arrested were a number of Czech police officers. As a foreign observer told Mr. Villard, the Germans had made "every possible mistake" since taking over the Protectorate, and surely it would be difficult to surpass such silly vandalism as the destruction in the Czech National Museum of documents and records recording the Czech fight against the tyranny of the Hapsburgs. It would be difficult to assess the folly, too, of expelling hundreds of students into the countryside, there to spread the story of oppression now rampant in the capital.

The Nazi attitude to the Czechs was well expressed in the extraordinary outburst of Herr Henlein, the German Governor of the Sudetenland, on Dec. 2, 1939, at the first Nazi public meeting to be held in Prague. "The Czechs should realize," he fulminated, "that wherever the Swastika flies it flies for ever. They should also free themselves from dreams of a Czech Legion, or they will lead themselves to destruction. We



**LITTLE FUEHRER OF SUDETEN GERMANS**

**Konrad Henlein (above), leader of the Sudeten German party in Czechoslovakia, was the chief agitator in the events which led to the crisis of September, 1938. After the Nazi annexation he became Gauleiter of Sudetenland and Civil Administrator for Bohemia.**

***Photo, International Graphic Press***

—the Reich, Bohemia and Moravia—are at war. But your Fuehrer is not the weak Emperor Charles in Vienna [presumably a reference to the last of the Austrian Kaisers, Charles, who abdicated in 1918]. Germany today has the strongest government in the world. Sabotage is going to be treated with the greatest severity. Who is against us will be destroyed." Henlein was followed on the rostrum by the notorious Dr. Ley, who reminded his hearers that it was in Prague that "the greatest misfortune the German race has ever endured—the thirty years' civil war"—had its beginning. But Prague was now once more what it had been for so many centuries, a centre of German culture.

To quote Mr. Villard again, the Nazis "have no sense that they are dealing with the greatest and most determined antagonists Europe has ever known, and that their only hope of winning them was by friendly methods, by putting wise and kindly officials in charge, by seeking their co-operation and giving them real autonomy from the start. This they have not done." Instead, the truncheon and the bullet, the packed court and the concentration camp, the suppression of political life, the repression of natural culture. And the irony of it—that when Herr Hitler marched into Czechoslovakia only six months before it was to "restore order."

**NAZI LABOUR FRONT LEADER**

**Below, Dr. Ley, leader of the German Labour Front, is seen speaking at a Party Congress. At the first Nazi public meeting to be held in Prague, on December 2, 1939, he informed his listeners that their city was once again what it had been for many centuries, a centre of German culture.**

***Photo, International Graphic Press***



## *Historic Documents. LXI–LXV*

# *RESOLUTE WAR EFFORT OF THE FRENCH NATION*

With the enemy on their very frontier, the French people realized, perhaps more acutely than the British, the need for self-sacrifice, courage and fortitude, if the Allies were to be victorious. The following extracts from speeches of leading statesmen stress the importance of these qualities in the struggle against the forces of aggression.

MR. CHURCHILL, FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY, IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, NOVEMBER 8, 1939:

THE French Navy has not for many generations been so powerful or so efficient. Under the long care of Admiral Darlan and the Minister of Marine, M. Campinchi, a magnificent fighting and seafaring force has been created. Not only have we been assisted in every way agreed upon before the war, but besides a whole set of burdens have been lifted off our shoulders by the loyal and ever-increasingly vigorous co-operation of the French Fleet. It seems to me a wonderful thing that when France is making so great an effort upon land she should at the same time offer to the Allied cause so powerful a reinforcement upon the seas.

M. PAUL REYNAUD, FRENCH FINANCE MINISTER, IN A BROADCAST, NOVEMBER 14, 1939:

WHAT about the French people? Imagine a country in which one in every eight inhabitants is in the army; a country in which women have replaced men in the factories and in the fields. Nearly all the horses and the lorries have been commandeered. Very often there remains in a village only one horse, which is used by all in turn. The women whose husbands have left for the front guide the plough.

Imagine what a blow it has been to the economic life of my country. Everyone has bravely faced the disaster. Our magnificent working class is working sixty hours a week and more, and they are not only working overtime, but they are giving up 40 per cent of their overtime pay. In addition to this, those under forty-nine who, by their age, are eligible for the army, are paying another 15 per cent of their salaries. . . . Not only have the French people accepted these sacrifices with courage, but in spite of all this difficulty the financial recovery has not been interrupted. The rich continue to bring their money back into their country. . . . The poor are making their money available to their country by increasing their savings in the banks. . . .

MR. ANTHONY EDEN, SECRETARY FOR DOMINION AFFAIRS, IN A BROADCAST IN FRENCH, NOVEMBER 19, 1939:

LAST week it was my good fortune to accompany to France Ministers from each of the Dominions overseas and a representative of the Government of India. . . . We had what was for many of us our first view of the famous Maginot defences, manned as they are today by an army which, for calm courage, training and efficiency, is unsurpassed.

France has made great sacrifices, financial and material, in order to complete her Maginot Line. Today freedom-loving peoples everywhere acknowledge with deep gratitude the debt which they owe to these impregnable defences and to the army which holds them. It requires little imagination to picture how different the military outlook for the Allies must have been had France not persisted with patience and thoroughness to complete her own defences and to perfect the training of her armies. Thus, not for the first time in human history, France has placed all civilization in her debt.

Some vivid pictures are left upon one's mind. The first is of a young French captain describing the defences of one of the smaller forts for which he was responsible. The smooth quiet confidence of his account, the sure grasp of every detail of the elaborate machinery at his command would have done credit to the most experienced chief of staff in any land. We found these same characteristics in these young French officers wherever we went. Beyond a shadow of doubt they know their job, and know it thoroughly. As a senior officer summed it up in a later conversation: "Ces garçons-là sont des gens sérieux." One felt as one watched them at their work and noted the soldierly bearing and quiet determination of the rank and file that it was not for nothing that those who hold the Maginot Line have as their watch-word "On ne passe pas."

The second picture is of the forward slope of a Maginot fort. It is early morning and the mist still lies thick on the ground. Peering through it two British soldiers stand on watch. They form part of an advanced post for special service with their French comrades. They are also the visible expression of the unity of two Empires who hold the same faith and cherish the same ideals.

M. DALADIER, PRIME MINISTER OF FRANCE, IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, NOVEMBER 30, 1939:

FOR almost three months our forces have been in contact with the enemy. On land our armies have already given proof of their valour. Forward of the fortified positions they are every day showing their mastery.

In the air, our Air Force and the British Air Force are victoriously confronting the enemy 'planes. On the seas, the fleets of Britain and France have paralysed the German submarine menace.

Contrary to all forecasts, military operations at the end of this third month have not yet developed with that violence and that vast and brutal extension over wide fronts which they seemed likely to assume.

We ought not to take this initiative. This war is to us a war for our security and our liberty. Our rule for those who defend us is economy in blood and economy in suffering. . . . Yet while husbanding the blood of Frenchmen we are accumulating without truce or respite powerful means which give us the certainty of being able to break the enemy's assaults and which would permit us, if necessary, to attack at the right moment with the minimum of losses and the certainty of success.

Since they have been fighting, our armies have deepened our line of resistance. One cannot talk now of the Maginot Line or of the lines which prolong it to the North Sea and the Jura. One must talk of a succession of lines, anti-tank obstacles, concrete works and casemates which protect French territory. . . .

The bonds which unite us with Great Britain have never been so strong and so deep as today. All speculation on possible dissensions between France and her faithful ally are completely in vain.

It is only necessary, in this connexion, to point to the struggle being carried on in the noblest spirit of sacrifice and comradeship on sea, land and air. It is sufficient to note that, up to the present, the losses in human lives suffered by Great Britain are higher than those of the French Army.

M. PAUL REYNAUD, FRENCH FINANCE MINISTER, IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, DECEMBER 13, 1939:

THIS is the language of sacrifice. . . . I consider victory to be certain, if Frenchmen will show themselves worthy of the great hours of their history. The war potential of the Allies is immense because the freedom of the sea, though disturbed, is still maintained.

After six years of the Nazi regime the German people are undergoing a nervous strain comparable with that which they underwent at the beginning of 1918 after three and a half years of war. Nazi leaders know that a military check would set in motion factors leading to the collapse of the regime drawing its sustenance from prestige and terrorism.

We must prepare ourselves against the dangers of prolonged military inaction. Hitler, who is a revolutionary agitator, has watched German democracy fall to pieces. He has always since 1933 placed his hope in the weakness of democracy, and he is still playing this card, believing that internal dissension will come as time passes. . . .

Perhaps in the darkest days our idea of liberty and prosperity will exist only in our hearts, but it will be ready to blossom forth after the day of trial.

That day is upon us, but we shall win. We shall conquer the enemy if first of all we conquer ourselves.

Chapter 33

# FRANCE'S MAGNIFICENT WAR EFFORT: FRUSTRATION OF THE NAZI 'BLITZKRIEG'

*Undeceived by the Munich Pourparlers France Speeded Up her Defence—Her Enormous Allocations for the Fighting Forces—Five Million Men Mobilized—Economic Help from the Colonies—A Covering Advance on the Siegfried Line—France's Remarkable Naval Contribution—Exploits of her Submarines*

ALTHOUGH the might and the resources of the British Empire would in the long run be the most decisive factor in the defeat of German ambitions, it was the powerful defence prepared by the French which destroyed the best hope of the Nazi leaders—the *Blitzkrieg*. It is true that Britain had accelerated her rearmament, especially in the air, from the moment that Mr. Neville Chamberlain returned from the interview with the German Fuehrer at Berchtesgaden. This interview, which had quickly followed the Munich conference of September 1938, meant, according to the British Prime Minister's statement, "peace in our time."

It is possible that some French citizens believed this; it is certain that many British citizens believed it. But not the British Government, which at last had caught up with the realism of the French, who in the main had been preparing for the German threat for several years on a scale and with a speed far greater than Britain. The resources of France and of the French Empire (which includes a population of some 110,000,000) were great, but in proportion to these resources the defence measures of the French when the war began had been greater than that of Britain.

In 1936 a large extra vote of about £56,000,000 for extending the Maginot Line, and for other defensive measures, brought home to many British people for the first time the seriousness of the French effort to prepare against German aggression. Several big additions to the military forces had been made since 1932, and others had still to be made before the French were satisfied that they could adequately resist when the final crisis arrived.

The great national effort involved in the extension of conscript service from one to two years represented a real sacrifice to the French, and for a time caused much heated political debate and even some riots. The ever-increasing expenditure on all three defence services—army, navy and air force—moreover, was a heavy burden; and early in 1938 it was found expedient to separate the growing defence expenditure from the ordinary budget. The Caisse Autonome de la Défense Nationale was set up to administer the defence funds, and it was managed by a board comprising the Defence Minister (M. Daladier) as Chairman, the Governor of the Bank of France, representatives of the Senate and Chamber, and officials of the Ministry of Finance. But most significant perhaps was the falling into line early in 1938 of the Trades Unions on their 40-hour week, which they agreed to forgo so that deliveries of armaments might be speeded up.

**Organizing the Air**

Speeding up of aircraft production had not been without its difficulties. In 1935 there was a crisis in the aeronautical industry, and in 1936 the industry was nationalized, being grouped into six "Sociétés Régionales." In 1937 the Air Minister had published a programme for the French Air Force, promising to quadruple its bombing power by the end of the year and to double its total strength. The number of aeroplanes had increased by 37 per cent in the preceding six months. By May of 1938 a plan for purchasing 'planes abroad was announced, so that the air fleet might be entirely renovated by 1940. This programme was well in hand when the war actually started, and the French air force quickly proved its superiority to the German, machine for machine, in the numerous small encounters during reconnaissance work over the German lines during the opening months of hostilities. When the U.S.A. embargo on arms to belligerents was removed, France already had orders awaiting execution in America for 850 Curtiss pursuit machines, 370 Douglas bombers, 200 North American trainers, 245 Martin bombers, and 40 Vought dive-bombers; and by December of 1939 she had ordered a further 650 Curtiss pursuit 'planes.

At the end of 1938 France had been consciously preparing for war, and little surprise was occasioned when one of her extra defence votes included £4,700,000 for A.R.P. The main part of the extra

**FRENCH SOLDIERS IN THEIR LEISURE HOURS**

**Just as, in England and with the B.E.F., institutions such as the Y.M.C.A. and the Church Army provide for the soldiers' recreation during their leisure hours, so the French soldier is catered for by the "Foyer du Soldat" (Soldier's Home). Below is one of these institutions.**

*Photo, Courtesy of the French Embassy*








## WAR COMES TO PARIS

As in London, many of Paris's Underground stations were temporarily closed for structural alterations. The top photograph shows a station in the Boulevard de la Madeleine. Also in common with London, many shops in Paris protected their windows from blast by strips of adhesive paper; Paris, however, made use of the talents of her artists, as shown, above left, by the ingenuous window decoration of a famous dressmaker. Above, Paris firemen are seen turning out for exercise. On the left are captured German aeroplanes exhibited in the Place de la Concorde; behind is the Luxor obelisk, protected by sandbags.

*Photos, Keystone; Topical; Wide World*

expenditure had again been for her magnificent army, which had grown in five years from less than half a million to 700,000 in 1937, compared with 1,000,000 in Germany's army, not counting reserves.

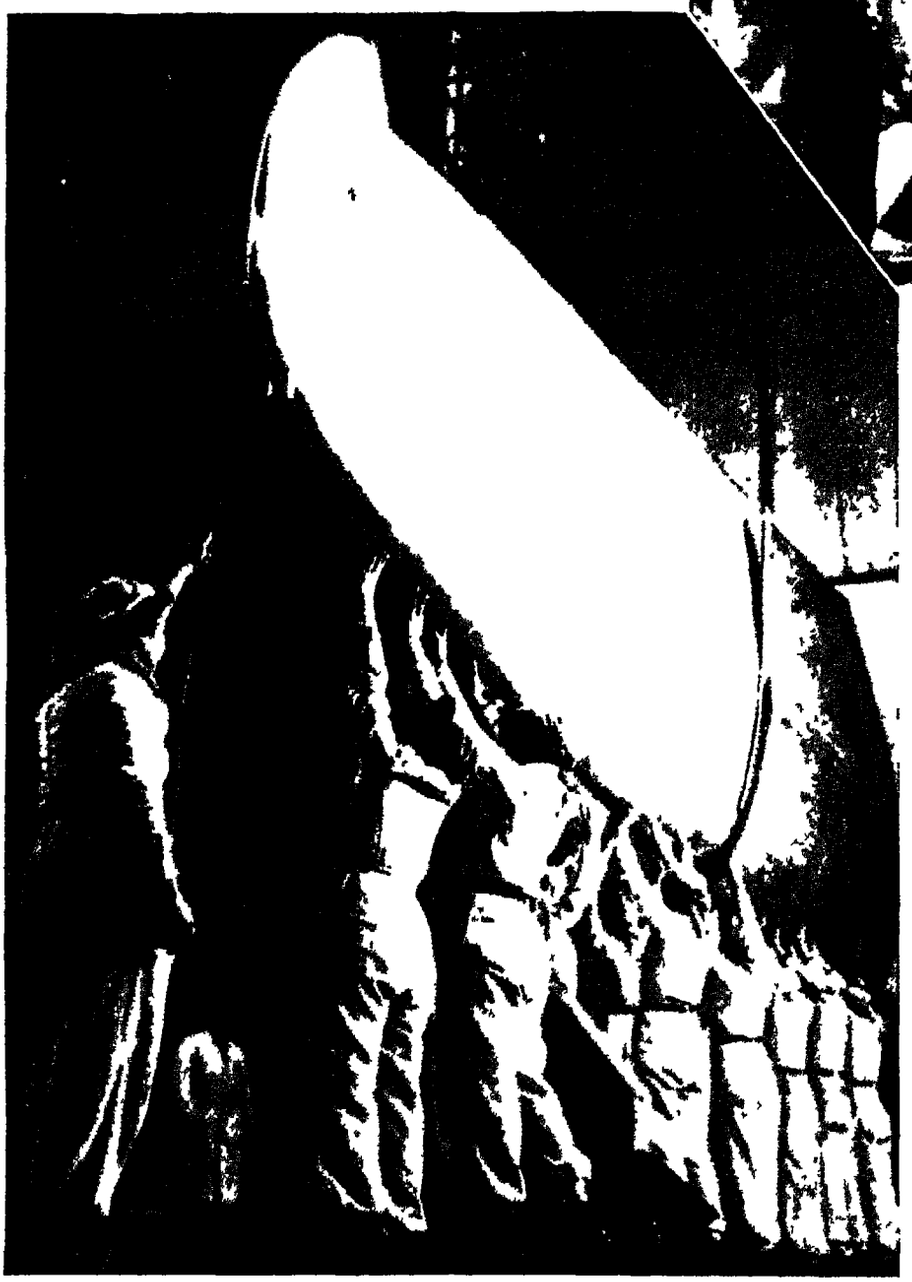
On August 24, 1939, France had 1,600,000 troops under arms, and the Government was prepared to begin general mobilization at any moment. Citizens already were being advised to avail themselves of the arrangements for evacuation from Paris. The next day the "Official Journal" published a decree ordering all firms and their employees engaged in the production of armaments to be requisitioned

**FRANCE SPEEDS UP PRODUCTION**

**On the right a worker in a French arsenal is seen stacking great naval shells Below, women workers, many of whom are employed in the French aircraft factories, are moving a completed wing on the next stage of its journey**

*Photos, Planet News, Courtesy of the French Embassy*





by the Government immediately. Another emergency decree enabled any vehicles, including taxis, buses and lorries, to be requisitioned for troop transport. Without elation of any kind, but without wavering, French men and women set themselves to face partings and all the grim preparations for another great war.

**No Panic in Paris**

Very soon the air-raid shelters were to be occupied in Paris and other towns, which received a series of warnings in the opening weeks of the war. There was a characteristic atmosphere about these shelters, the women going on with their knitting, the men not forgetting to bring when possible a bottle of wine to encourage conversation until the "all clear." Very soon the civilians had to put up with the disappearance of their coffee, which had been commandeered for the troops, though some further supplies were coming from overseas. And cheap red wine got scarce, for it was wanted by the army, whose ration of wine was the poilu's protection against cold, wet, and boredom.

Enlistments of foreign volunteers went on throughout the autumn in Paris, and these men included Poles, anti-Fascist Italians, Russians, and Hungarians. The Czechoslovak Legation in Paris, which had remained open since the invasion of their country, issued a communiqué stating that Czechs and Slovaks in France were not stateless




**ITALIANS WHO FOUGHT FOR FRANCE**

**During the weeks which followed the outbreak of war, great numbers of foreigners living in France volunteered to fight for the Allied cause, including many Italian anti-Fascists exiled in France. Above, a recruiting bureau for Italians in Paris.**

*Photo, Keystone*

exiles, but would fight as allies of France under their own national flag. "The Friends of the French Republic," a federation of foreign associations in France, with a membership of 3,000,000, issued an appeal for volunteers. Thus did France, the flower and the fortress of European liberty and civilization, find that in her resolute strength she was the rallying point of many friends.

By the middle of September 5,000,000 men had been mobilized, and the total was expected to reach 6,000,000 within a few weeks. That this was achieved undisturbed by enemy action was due principally to the strength of France's fortifications and to the threat of enormous reprisals by the British and French Air Forces for any indiscriminate bombing by German 'planes.

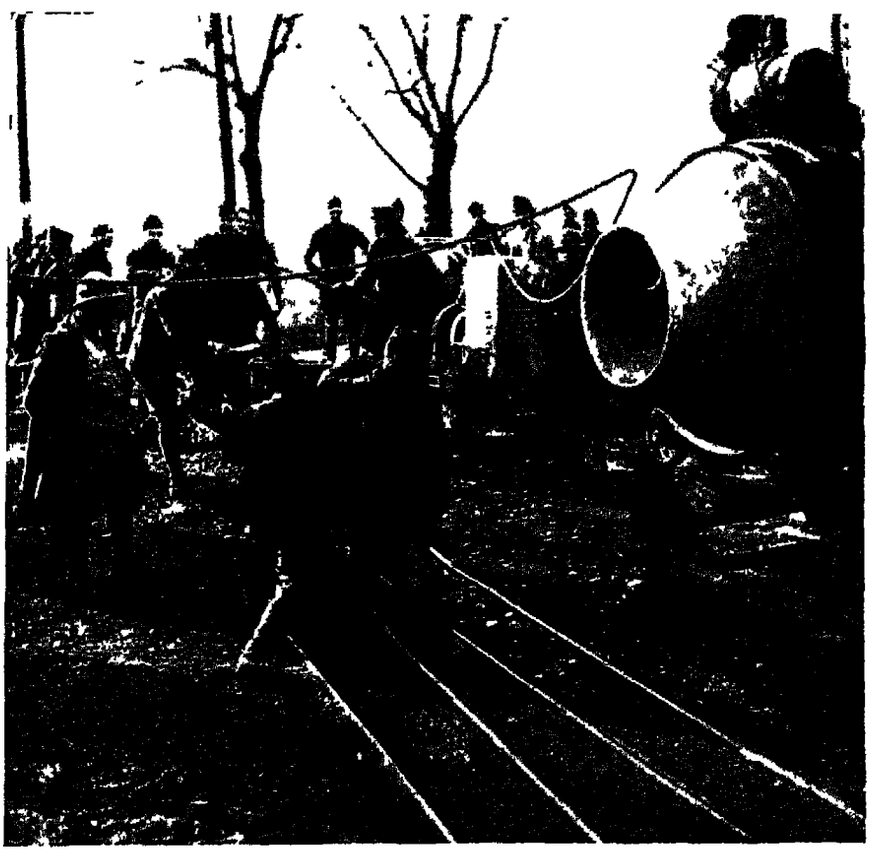
The French Ministry of Colonies also announced that the number of men mobilized in the French Empire had reached, and would soon pass, the total recruited in 1914–1918. That total was 274,000. On the basis of Italian recruitment of colonial troops in 1938, in proportion to resources, France was capable of raising her total to 500,000, in case of need. There was little temptation for Signor Mussolini to go back on the decision of the Italian Government to take no initiative on the side of Germany by attacking French Colonial possessions in Africa. French superiority on the north coast of Africa was a vital element of British security in helping to keep the Mediterranean free from enemy control, and its importance had been greatly increased by the establishment (with Fascist and Nazi help) of a reactionary government in Spain.

M. Mandel, the Minister of Colonies, describing the economic contributions of the French Empire, announced that he had instructed Colonial Governors to provide from the harvest then in progress a total of 3,500,000 tons of alimentary products, which included 1,600,000 tons of cereals, mostly from French Indo-China; 1,000,000 tons of oil-yielding products, specially ordered from African possessions, and 800,000 tons of various colonial foodstuffs, including tea, coffee, cocoa, sugar and rum. To this must be added an order of 800,000 tons of industrial materials, which included 300,000 tons of wood, 350,000 tons of coal, etc., 60,000 tons of rubber, and 40,000 tons of textiles.

As impressive as the speedy mobilization of the armed cohorts of democratic France was the new spirit of unity made manifest when war was declared on outlawed Germany. Daladier's expression of the determination of France and Britain never to sign a separate peace was a necessary declaration only as an answer to Nazi propaganda attempting to cause a split between the Allies. It was hailed throughout France in the temper of such Press responses as that of M. Saint Brice in the "Journal": "The British and French sense of honour, their tenacity, and traditions show categorically that, now that the struggle has begun, it will be pursued to the end." And "Le Jour" said: "No separate peace. So France wrote in the Franco-Polish protocol on Tuesday. Britain thinks the same. Let us scotch in advance all argument on this subject."

**Unity with Britain**

This was the language of public declarations, but behind it were the memories of the people. The B.B.C. correspondent, Mr. Richard Dimbleby,



**STRENGTHENING THE EASTERN DEFENCES**

**During the lull in the fighting on the Western Front the Allies were not inactive. The Maginot Line, France's bulwark against an invader, was further consolidated and extended in depth. Above, French soldiers are building concrete shelters near the front line.**

*Photo, Courtesy of the French Embassy*







## COLOURED WARRIORS FROM FRANCE'S COLONIAL EMPIRE

In time of war France can call upon great reserves of man-power in her colonial empire, and in this page various types of French colonial soldier are shown. Top left, a section of Tirailleurs Sénégalais are seen at trench mortar practice. Above is a member of a medical unit attached to the Tirailleurs Algériens. Left are French West African troops with donkeys used for carrying machine-guns Below, the scene in Antananarivo, capital of Madagascar, as native troops left for France.

*Photos, Courtesy of French Embassy; Keystone, Planet News*



broadcasting in October, told of a drive towards a certain French town through one of the eastern areas, full of names made tragic and glorious by the last war. And it was raining endlessly on the heavy soil, turning all to mud.

"We had driven along those roads, splashing through puddles and seeing through the foggy windows of the car the villages and hamlets, and even the towns, which have been built up from wreckage. We had with us in our car an Air Force officer who bombed many of these districts during the last war. He would wipe the window and peer out and exclaim, 'There used to be an ammunition dump here; I remember having a shot at it early one morning.' Once when he said this, or something like it, the civilian driver of the car—an Englishman from Paris—turned his head and said, 'Our front line was just here; you must have been one of those blighters that nearly bombed us as well as the Germans.' And so it went on. First the Air Force man, then the conducting officer, then the driver—recognizing some village, or perhaps some hill or valley, and all the time we were passing those glistening signboards in the rain.

"It was the modern army that I could see around us that night; but even as that Air Force officer told how when he flew over France today he could see the marks of trenches stretching for miles over fields and meadows, so I had seen the marks, the signs and the graves which make up the ghostly pattern of that other Army in that other war."

In the first few weeks of the war, while Britain was transporting an army to France and the Germans were resorting to "frightfulness" at sea, as in 1914, the French artillery began to hammer selected points of the still incomplete fortifications of the Siegfried Line, and, as a measure of additional security, the infantry occupied positions well in advance of the Maginot Line. They found that the German territory was thickly sown with concealed mines, but they quickly learned to anticipate the typical cunning tricks of their enemies, and the casualties from these booby-traps were relatively small. In the Warndt Forest alone it was stated that 3,000 unexploded mines were collected by the French. Sometimes a German prisoner was able to give helpful information. One told his captors how to distinguish between an abandoned house or cottage that was mined and one that was safe. The mined buildings, he said, had a skull-and-crossbones painted on the door. The unmined ones had only the crossbones!

The majority of the German advance troops were found to be members of the Nazi S.S organization, which fact supported a belief held at the time that at the beginning of hostilities the German army's morale was shaky. Many prisoners, it appeared, had been unaware that they were actually at war with France, not to speak of Britain. They had been told that the "glorious"



**FRENCH DESTROYER THAT 'BAGGED' THE U-BOATS**

The French destroyer "Siroco" (above), commanded by Capitaine de Corvette Lapébie, made naval history by sinking two German submarines in three days and following this up by sinking another a week or two later. The "Siroco" acted in conjunction with a French seaplane which did duty as "spotter."

*Photo, Courtesy of the French Embassy*

German victory in Poland was the end of fighting. The extent of German military demoralization had still to be tested by events. What was certain was the efficiency of the French military machine. The French in their covering tactics during the first five weeks of the war had occupied nearly 200 square miles of German territory and had compelled the evacuation of the important Saar coalfield and the town of Saarbruecken. Though small, measured by distance, the French advances were important in seizing high observation posts and enabling accurate artillery fire to embarrass German concentrations.

The Maginot Line along the Rhine-Moselle front was out of range of the German artillery in this phase, and in the Warndt Forest area the French pushed forward some eight miles beyond the German frontier. The next phase was a series of evacuations of the outposts in German territory, to hold which would have caused heavy casualties, and the French advance line was retired slightly until it approximated to the French frontier. But by October 1939 there was no longer any fear of the interruption of French and British military concentrations of men and material, and the German army leaders were faced with the unpleasant problem of what to do if the Allies decided to stay where they were while their Navies maintained a stranglehold on Germany by blockade. Concentrations of troops were reported near Switzerland and close to the Belgian and Dutch frontiers, and it began to seem probable that, rather than face the casualties which must result from hurling the German armies at the Maginot fortifications, the German High Command would invade these small neutral countries.

But the French had not been content with their great defensive works prepared in peace. Ever since the war began they had continued to extend the defensive system.

**'Doubling' the Maginot Line**

General Gamelin had never sanctioned the popular notion that the Maginot Line was "impregnable," and a barrier behind which France's armies could sit down in peace. Such a line was essentially a powerful reserve or base facilitating attack. An enemy attempting to storm it must be faced by serious opposition in front of the main fortifications. By December 1939 the French Army was estimated to have used about 15 million square yards of wire and barbed wire since the start of the war. Four million stakes and 65,000 tons of wire were put up. Some 4½ million cubic centimetres of earth were removed, and 700,000 cubic metres of concrete were used in deepening and strengthening the Maginot system of fortifications.

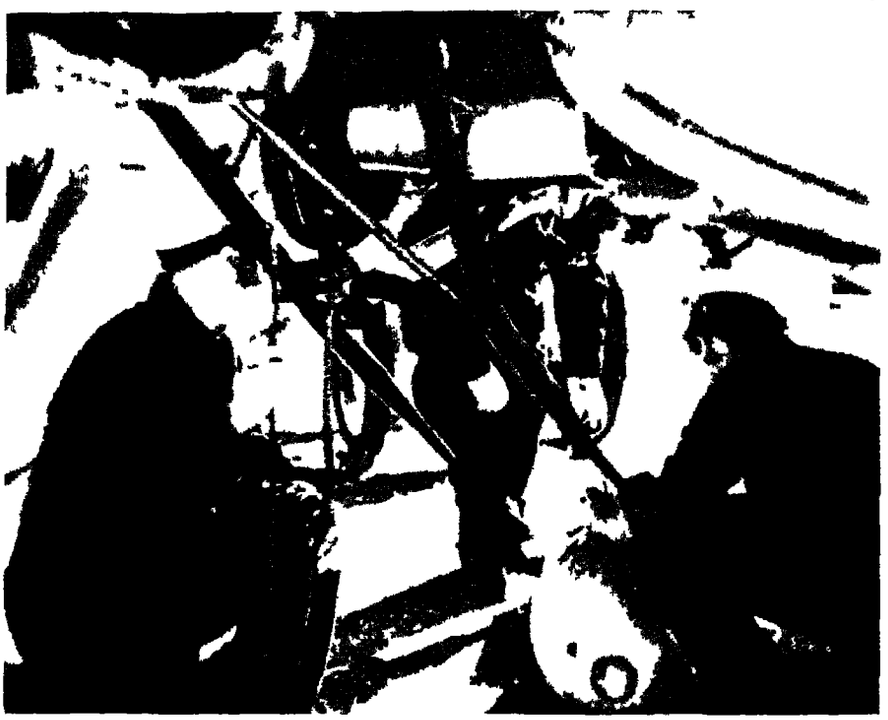
Work was also pressed forward in the same period to complete the French defences along the Belgian frontier. Here the concrete turrets and the sunken emplacements more resembled the original Maginot Line, but in the south an interesting variation of method was adopted. The "Trou de Bâle," or Basle Gap, had been a troublesome problem,

owing to an ancient treaty of 1815 prohibiting the construction of fortifications within 15 kilometres (about 10 miles) of the Swiss city of Basle. The French had decided to observe this legal obligation although modern conditions of warfare would have excused a breach of it. The French line of forts along the Rhine below Basle accordingly stopped short outside the legal radius. But the Germans had no such scruples. They had begun building fortified lines close to the Swiss border in March 1938, a circumstance which the French considered good enough reason for extending their own fortifications. They did so in such a way that they could either check an enemy advance into France direct, or quickly assist in resisting an invasion of Switzerland.

**On the Swiss Border**

The terrain on these foothills of the Jura Mountains needed a specially designed fortification. Before the end of 1939 the French had a vast network of trenches, tank traps, wire entanglements, and all kinds of well concealed artillery positions. This artillery could cover the Rhine and dominate the Belfort Gap, between the Vosges and the Jura. If, instead of this route, the Germans attempted to come by the more southerly approach, along a valley running into Switzerland near Porrentruy, the French artillery was equally prepared to put down a deadly barrage right across the strip of Swiss territory.

But perhaps most remarkable of all France's efforts, since so little had it been considered by comparison with military and air power, was her naval contribution to the Allies' forces. As was expected Germany had at once commenced her war of attrition on the high seas, and the first phase of the war resolved itself largely into a naval conflict. For the Allied blockade spelt Germany's doom, and could be broken (if at all) within a sufficiently brief period only by a German counter blockade, carried out with the utmost ruthlessness and disregard of all neutral rights and of the considerations of common humanity. U-boats, flying boats and enemy raiders, including two pocket battleships (the 'Deutschland' and the 'Graf Spee'), were engaged in this furious effort. And the French Navy's part was immensely important in countering it. The French Admiralty





MACHINES OF THE FRENCH NAVAL AIR ARM

**Above, a squadron of Latecoere torpedo flying-boats, belonging to the French Naval Air Force is about to set out on a reconnaissance flight. The torpedoes can be plainly seen suspended between the cockpit and the floats, while some ingenious artist with a sense of humour has transformed the nose of the second machine into the fearsome likeness of a shark. Top bombs being fixed to a French naval plane**

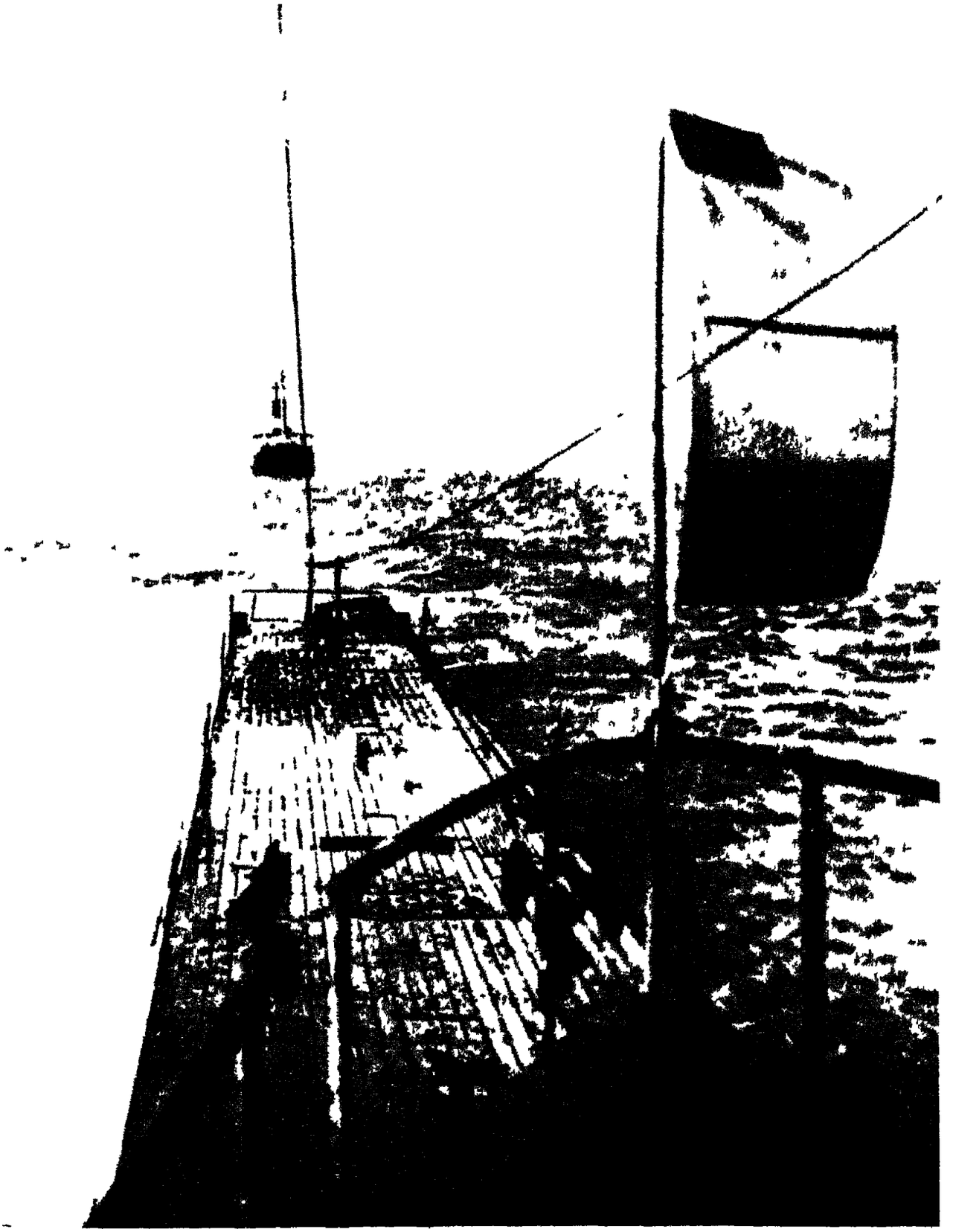
*Photos, Courtesy of the French Embassy, Associated Press*

was even more silent than the traditionally silent British Service, but Mr Winston Churchill lifted a corner of the veil when he spoke in the House of Commons on November 8 of

> the remarkable contribution of the French Navy, which has not been for many generations so powerful or so efficient.
>
> 'Not only have we been assisted in every way agreed upon before the war, but besides a whole set of burdens have been lifted off our shoulders by the loyal and ever increasingly vigorous co-operation of the French Fleet."

Like the British, the French Navy from the first took a steady toll of the U-boats, one remarkable feat being that of the French destroyer "Siroco," which sank two enemy submarines in three days and not long afterwards accounted for a third. Minesweeping, patrols, convoy work and special missions were carried out ceaselessly.

Until the new British battleships of the "King George V" Class could come into service, France was, of the two Allies, the one which possessed the most modern battleships—the magnificent vessels of the "Dunkerque" class,



FRENCH SUBMARINE ESCORTS HER PRIZE

During the month of November, 1939, a French ocean-going submarine captured the German cargo-boat "Chemnitz" in mid-Atlantic and, after having placed a prize crew on board, for five days and five nights "convoyed" it to the safety of a French port. Above, the French submarine is seen leading the German vessel to harbour. The cargo of the "Chemnitz" included 4,000 tons of wool and 3 000 tons of cobalt and zinc ore.

*Photo, Planet News*



WARS ARE WON HERE AS WELL AS ON THE FIELD

In modern warfare mechanical equipment plays so great a part that human courage would be of little avail without the backing of adequate armaments War eats up material at an alarming rate, and it is essential in wartime to be able to supply the armies in the field and the Navy at sea with ample stocks of guns and ammunition Above is a general view of the 'gun shop" in one of Britain's largest armament factories

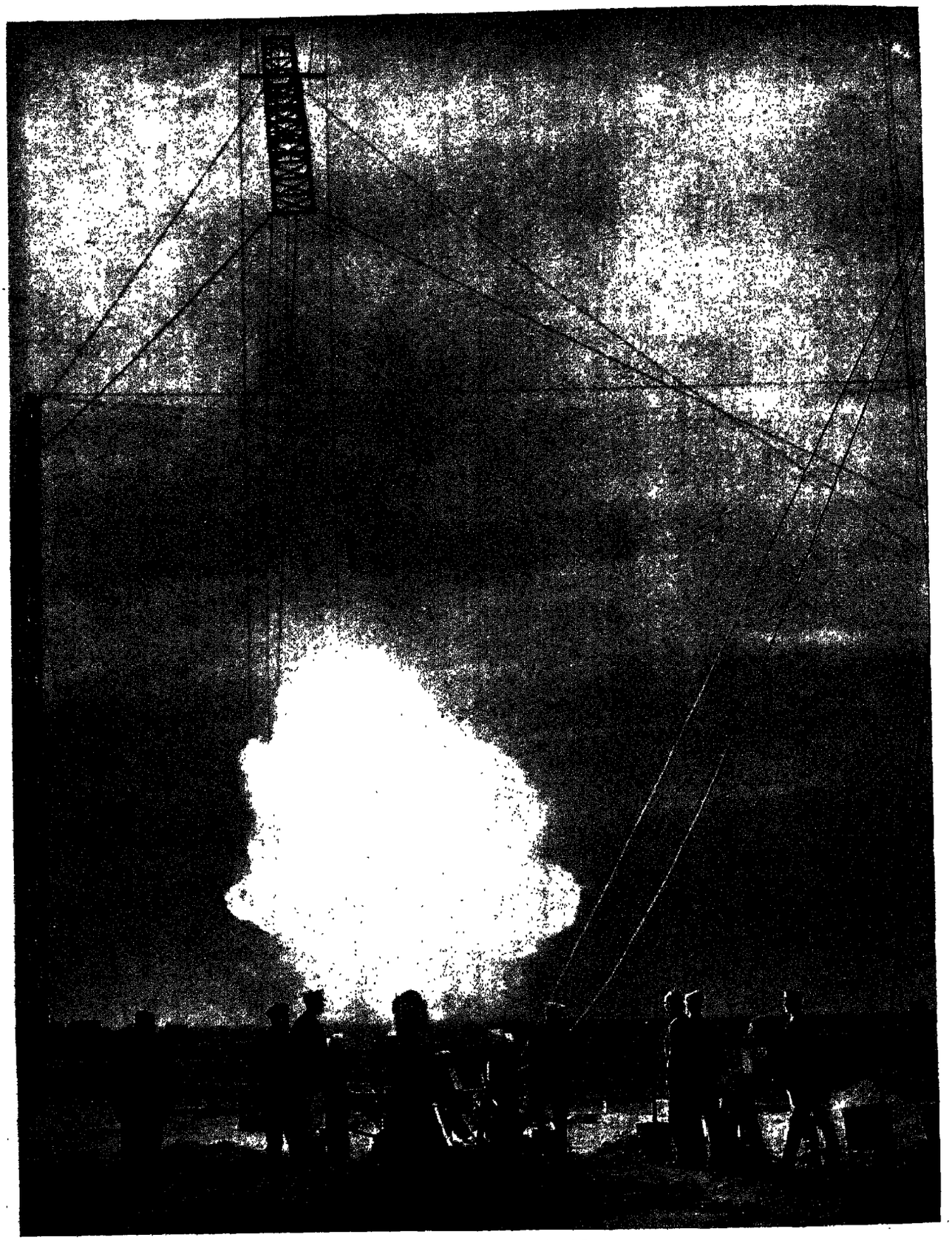
*Photo, Sport & General*



## WHERE ARMAMENTS ARE BORN

Among the most important contributions to Britain's immense war effort was that made by our great iron and steel works, and this photograph, taken at a typical plant, is symbolic of the industrial strength which enabled Britain to maintain the efficiency of her fighting forces In this huge foundry, where shafts of sunlight cast strange patterns through the smoke, a workman, standing beneath a huge tilting ladle, is pouring molten steel into ingot moulds.

*Photo, Fox*



**TESTING BRITAIN'S BIG GUNS AND SHELLS**

**In this striking photograph, a howitzer is being tested at a range in England, one of the Ministry of Supply's experimental stations. The gun is laid on the target and the cage-like structure seen at the top of the photograph is adjusted to the trajectory of the shell. The projectile, which can actually be seen in flight, passes through this cage and the muzzle velocity is thereby determined.**

*Photo, Planet News*

which were commissioned in 1937 and 1938. The "Dunkerque" and her sister ship the "Strasbourg" resembled in appearance the battleships of the "Nelson" class, the main armament being concentrated forward. It consisted of eight 13-inch guns in quadruple turrets on the upper deck forward, three sets of twin turrets mounting twelve 5·1-inch guns placed aft, with four more 5·1-inch guns abeam. An aircraft catapult was installed on the quarter-deck. The "Dunkerque" is said to have been the French battleship which joined the British naval force outside Montevideo to wait for the "Graf Spee," Germany's pocket battleship that had been battered and forced to run into the neutral harbour by British cruisers in December 1939. The "Graf Spee," when her time was up, came out again to avoid internment, and was scuttled by her commander.

The continued safety of the trade routes of the Allies entailed the surveillance and control of some 85,000 nautical miles for the Navies of the British Empire and about 50,000 nautical miles for the French Navy. The task was huge, but not beyond the power of the combined fleets, and some idea of the extent to which France can contribute to this task may be gained from the table of the French Navy, printed opposite.

**Facts and Figures**

Among the French submarines was the "Surcouf," the largest and most powerful submarine in the world. Its armament consisted of 8-inch guns as well as torpedoes, 22 of the latter being carried. She was driven on the surface by Diesel engines of 7,600 h.p., and, when submerged, by electric motors of 3,400 h.p. Her crew numbered 150.

An outstanding exploit by a French submarine was the capture of the "Chemnitz," one of the few German merchant vessels which the Allies were able to seize, since most of them had fled to the safety of neutral ports. Here, too, the French were able to bring their prize back intact, whereas in many similar cases the German crew managed to scuttle their ship. The following account was given by the second-in-command of the submarine to Joseph Kessel, a war correspondent:

"We had nearly reached the end of our mission and nothing had happened. One morning, remaining on the surface rather longer than usual, for the crew were beginning to feel the strain, we noticed a large cargo vessel on the horizon. We drew near with our guns ready to fire. She made off as soon as she recognized us, but it was too late. Her commander had hesitated, thinking at first that we were a German submarine.

"We soon caught up with her and signalled to her crew to abandon ship. This did not take long. We approached cautiously, looking to see that there were no sliding panels which might suddenly drop down and uncover a gun. As a further measure of security we passed under her bows and examined the other side. Everything seemed inoffensive.

"So our captain sent a prize crew aboard the 'Chemnitz,' numbering about a third of our men. They visited the ship from top to bottom and found no traps. The Germans were then told they could return to their ship. They did not need to be asked twice for the sea was infested with sharks.

"Then we took the 'Chemnitz' into a French port, the submarine following. Five days and five nights of pretty tiring work, for we were minus a third of our men and in the normal course of events we had not a man too many. The ship was carrying a valuable cargo: 4,000 tons of wool and 3,000 tons of cobalt and zinc ore. It was worth at least 25 million francs."

The French Fleet Air Arm included a number of great flying-boats similar to those used on the transatlantic mail service between France and South America. These huge seaplanes, with four or six engines and weighing from fifteen to thirty tons, have been of inestimable value for reconnaissance and convoy work. One such machine is seen in the photograph in page 358.

The French Navy had not only powerful bases at home, such as Brest and Toulon, but, like the British Navy, possessed modern harbour accommodation in many outlying stations, such as Bizerta, Oran, Casablanca, Dakar, Fort de France, and Saigon, in which the largest ships could shelter and refuel.

Moreover, the French Admiralty was already, when war broke out, completing an important unfinished naval programme. The "Richelieu" and the "Jean Bart," of 35,000 tons, both to be commissioned a little later, were capable of a speed of 30 knots and were armed with eight 15-inch guns. In addition, two more battleships of 35,000 tons, the "Clemenceau" and the "Gascogne," had also been laid down before December 1939. Although France possessed only one aircraft carrier (the "Béarn") in service, two others ("Joffre" and "Painlevé") were being rapidly completed.

## THE WAR STRENGTH OF THE FRENCH NAVY

**Battleships**

| | Tonnage | Armament |
|---|---|---|
| *Jean Bart | 35,000 | Eight 15-inch guns, fifteen 6-inch and twelve other A.A., 4 aircraft and 2 catapults. |
| *Richelieu | 35,000 | |
| Dunkerque | 26,500 | Eight 13-inch guns, sixteen 5·1-inch and eight other A.A.; one catapult. |
| Strasbourg | 26,500 | |
| **Bretagne | 22,200 | Ten 13·4-inch guns, fourteen 5·5-inch, eight A.A. |
| **Provence | 22,200 | |
| **Lorraine | 22,200 | Eight 13·4-inch guns, fourteen 5·5-inch, eight A.A., one catapult. |
| †Courbet | 22,200 | Twelve 12-inch guns, twenty-two 5·5-inch, seven A.A., 4 submerged torpedo tubes. |
| †Océan | 22,200 | |
| †Paris | 22,200 | |

* Laid down in 1936–37. ** Completed, 1915–16; reconstructed, 1932–36.

† Completed, 1913–14; reconstructed, 1928–29.

Two 35,000-ton battleships, the "Clemenceau" and the "Gascogne," have been laid down.

**Cruisers**

| | Tonnage |
|---|---|
| Algérie | 10,000 |
| Suffren | 10,000 |
| Colbert | |
| Dupleix | |
| Foch | |
| Duquesne | 10,000 |
| Tourville | |
| Georges Leygues | 7,600 |
| Gloire | |
| Jean de Vienne | |

**Cruisers** (*contd.*)

| | Tonnage |
|---|---|
| La Galissonnière | 7,600 |
| Marseillaise | |
| Montcalm | |
| Emile Bertin | 5,900 |
| Duguay-Trouin | 7,300 |
| Lamotte-Picquet | |
| Primauguet | |
| *Jeanne d'Arc | 6,500 |

* Designed as a training ship for naval cadets.

*Under construction or authorized:* "De Grasse," "Châteaurenault" & "Guichen" (8,000 tons).

**Light Surface Craft** (rated "contre-torpilleurs" and "torpilleurs."

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 15 years old | Over 2,200 tons displacement | 32 |
| | Between 1,000 and 2,200 tons displacement | 26 |
| | Less than 1,000 tons displacement | 12 |
| Others building or authorized | Between 1,000 and 2,200 tons displacement | 25 |
| | Over 2,200 tons displacement | 4 |

**Submarines**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 10 years old | Over 1,200 tons displacement | 30 |
| | Less than 1,200 tons displacement | 28 |
| More than 10 years old | | 19 |
| Others building or authorized | Over 1,200 tons displacement | 5 |
| | Less than 1,200 tons displacement | 20 |

**Aircraft Carriers**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Béarn | 22,000 tons |
| Under construction: | Joffre and Painlevé | 18,000 tons |

Chapter 34

# BRITAIN'S INDUSTRIES TURN FROM PEACE TO WAR: ORGANIZATION OF WAR SUPPLIES

*Britain's Biggest Industrial Task—Story of the Ministry of Supply—A Speedy and Enormous Expansion of Output from Ordnance Factories—The World's Biggest Buyer of Transport Vehicles—Clothing the Fighting Forces—A Word about the Human Element*

ALTHOUGH during the first few months of war there was almost unbroken calm on the battlefront at home in Britain the nation's factories and workshops resounded with the clamour of martial preparation Here there was none of the quietness of which the British soldier complained on the contrary, there was the crash of mighty hammers the rattle of cranes the roar of blazing furnaces the ear splitting shriek of shells belched forth by guns fresh from the foundry

By day and by night the work went on Men—and women, too—by the hundred thousand toiled with muscle and brain, wrestled with the inchoate materials torn from Nature's womb, and so contributed to the nation's armament a master 14 inch naval gun or a little Bren a ponderous shell destined perhaps to crash through the defences of a fort in the Siegfried Line or a stumpy little fellow which might halt with a vengeance the march of a Nazi tank As yet never a shot was fired by all the guns massed so close and deep on the British front, but behind the line, on both sides of the Channel, vast stacks of shells were piled up in readiness for the blaze of battle Military stores of every kind, indeed, were multiplied during those weeks of waiting, so that when the war really began there should be no waiting for the material which should blast the way to victory

In the three years that had elapsed since 1936, when Britain roused herself from her halcyon dreamings and girded up her loins to the task of rearmament she became a vast manufactory of war

We have on hand now, said the Director General of Munitions Production after the experience of some ten weeks of war, probably the biggest industrial task which has ever been undertaken in this country" In two years the number of workers engaged on armament and munitions production was multiplied eight times, and more than ten thousand factories were directly engaged on Government orders, whereas in normal times a handful of Royal Ordnance factories and specialized armament plants were sufficient to provide for every need As the weeks wore on the number of workers and of factories increased by leaps and bounds In the first hundred days of war orders to the value of £200,000,000 were given by the Ministry of Supply—established in

**£200,000,000 in 100 Days**

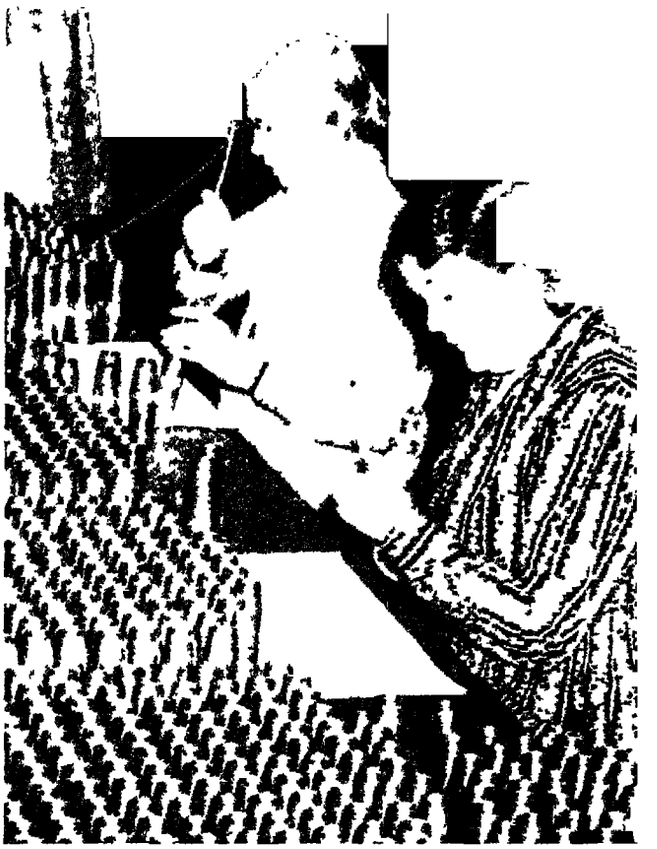
### THE SUPPLY COUNCIL IN SESSION

**The Ministry of Supply was set up in the early days of the war to co-ordinate and direct munitions production Its Council is seen below in session On the extreme right of the photograph is Mr O S Cleverly, the Secretary Then, going clockwise round the table, we see Mr P Bennett (Dir -Gen of Tanks and Transport) , Sir Andrew Duncan (Chairman of Committee of Control later President of the Board of Trade) Eng Vice-Admiral Sir Harold Brown (Dir Gen Ammunition Production) , Sir Arthur Robinson (Deputy Chairman), Mr Leslie Burgin (Chairman and Minister of Supply) , Lord Weir (Dir -Gen of Explosives) , Lord Woolton (Dir -Gen Equipment and Stores) , Mr Ashley Cooper (Dir -Gen Finance) , Lt Gen Sir Maurice Taylor (Senior Military Adviser) and Col J Llewellin (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Supply)**

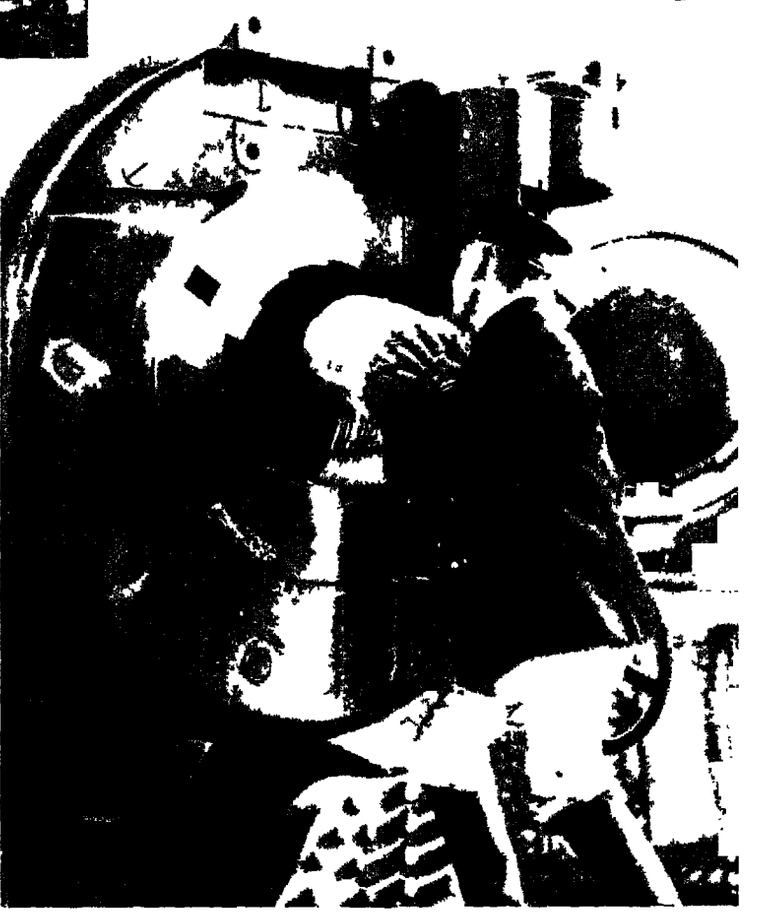
*Photo Fox*









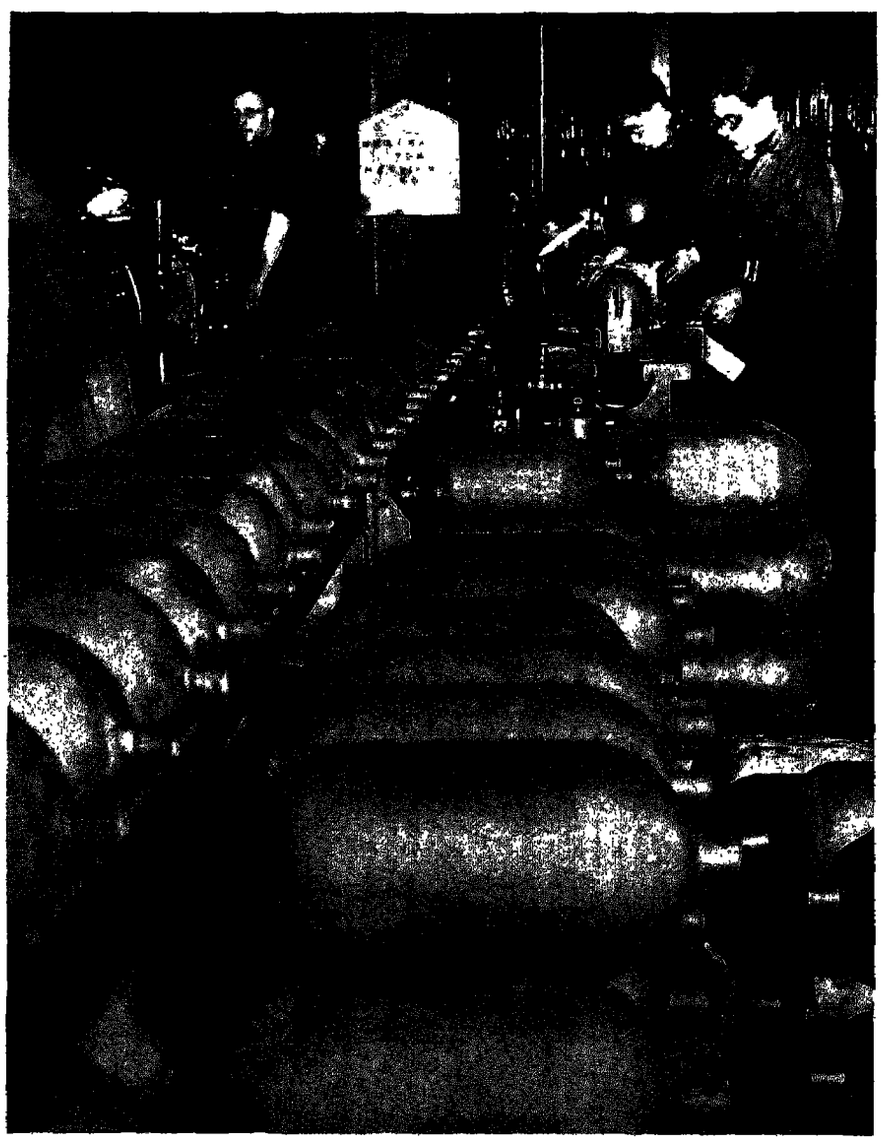


## SHELLS FOR THE GUNS—BIG AND LITTLE

The photographs in this page show various stages in the making of shells Top left, a white-hot shell is being extracted from a mechanical shell forger, top right, women workers inspecting shell cases, bottom left, 9 5-inch shells being stacked after processing, bottom right, a gunner at a Ministry of Supply experimental station placing a propellant charge in the breech of a big siege gun

*Photos, Fox Associated Press*

April 1939, with Mr. Leslie Burgin as its head—which was charged with the initiation, inspiration and direction of this unparalleled effort. Soon after war began its activities became so vast that the Minister appointed a Council of Supply composed of "leaders in the civilian world of industry, commerce, and finance," under his chairmanship. Sir Arthur Robinson, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry, was appointed Deputy Chairman. Engineer Vice-Admiral Sir Harold Brown, for four years Engineer-in-Chief of the Fleet, became Director-General of Ammunition Production. The Director-General of Explosives was Lord Weir; and Mr. Peter Bennett, President of the Federation of British Industries, assumed a similar post in connexion with the production of tanks and mechanized transport. Sir Andrew Duncan, who in the first week of war was appointed Controller of Iron and Steel, became Chairman of the Committee of Control. Finance fell to Mr. P. Ashley Cooper, a Director of the Bank of England. Lord Woolton, adviser to the War Office on Army Textile Supplies and President of the Drapers' Chamber of Commerce, became Director-General of Equipment and Stores. The Council was completed by the addition of Lt.-Gen. Sir Maurice Taylor, former Deputy Master-General of the Ordnance for Production and Supply, as senior Military Adviser, and Col. J. J. Llewellin, M.P., who became Parliamentary Secretary.



**FOR AIRMEN AT HIGH ALTITUDES**

**The personnel of R.A.F. aircraft which have to fly at a great height are equipped with oxygen masks, to which the oxygen is led via a regulating valve and tubing from the cylinders in which *it is stored. A batch of these high altitude oxygen bottles is seen above during the course of* manufacture in a British factory.**

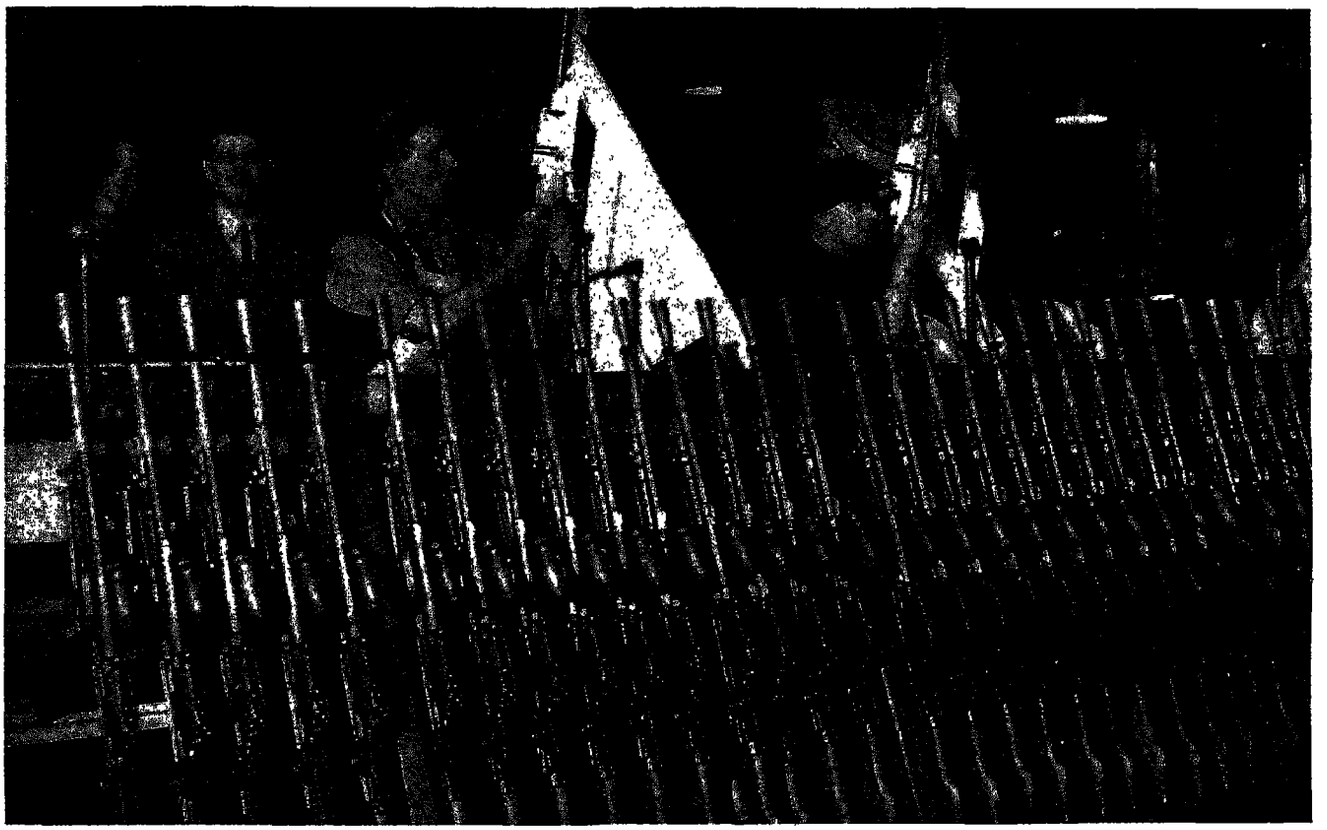
*Photo, Fox*

The Ministry's task, as stated by Mr. Burgin, was to see that the soldier was clothed, equipped, given weapons of offence and defence, and fully supplied in every way from the moment of his departure from his home for service right through to the winning of the ultimate victory. Incidentally, the Ministry was concerned with the production and provision of "common user" goods for the Navy and Royal Air Force, and also supplied in considerable measure the armed forces of the Dominions.

**Groundwork of Supply**

Vast changes were wrought in the nation's economy by the Ministry's activities. Much preparatory work had been done in the uneasy years just before the war; the technique of armament making had been thoroughly explored, new methods tried out and developed; industrial plants had been inspected with a view to ascertaining which could be turned over to war work as soon as the emergency required it. Firms had been supplied with process manuals to show how the work, if and when ordered, should be done. At every step, in every stage, the co-operation of industry was as willing as it was complete, and not once but many times the Government experts were quick to acknowledge that certain ideas and processes that emanated from private practice were such as should be at once incorporated in the specifications. As a result of this careful planning it was a comparatively easy matter to switch over plants in all parts of the country to national service. Specialized machinery had been installed in readiness, buildings had been adapted, key men engaged. The outbreak of war marked but a further stage in a transformation which had been already begun.

Some aspects of the transformation were surprising enough. The gramophone and wireless industry devoted itself to the production of fuses, gauges, precision instruments and shells of one kind and another. The electrical industry found a fresh field in tanks, guns and gun mountings, instruments and shells; and so, too, did the firms which heretofore had been noted for the quality of their agricultural machines and tractors. Machinery employed in sugar manufacture was early converted to the production of armour plate. The knitting machine industry turned itself to producing small arms components, gun mountings and complex instruments. At the same time there was no unnecessary interruption of the production of articles intended for normal civilian use; and those responsible for



## SPEEDING AHEAD WITH SUPPLIES

Above is a view of the Bren gun assembly shop in a Royal Ordnance factory specializing in the production of small arms. Below, mechanics in a Ministry of Supply factory are seen assembling the chassis of army trucks on a moving platform, known as the chassis assembly line. In this factory various types of military vehicles are manufactured.

*Photos, Planet News; Sport & General*



the direction of the industrial effort did their best to see that the work was evenly distributed, so that not only did each district receive a fair share of the war orders, but the risks of war were distributed far and wide.

War is no longer a matter of men, but of machines, declared the Director of Ammunition Production: the problem today was to beat our ploughshares into swords, and at the same time to see that there were sufficient ploughshares for civilian needs and for our export trade.

So successful was the conversion that in a very short time it could be claimed that the work of German technicians had been surpassed in fields in which, openly or in secret, they had laboured for years past.

**Beating the Nazis**

Thus, whereas a certain German shell-producing machine could produce a shell in 15 minutes, a British machine of new pattern could turn out a shell in 35 minutes—no inconsiderable saving when the product is counted by scores of thousands.

Then there may be noted marked advances on the technique employed in the munitions factories of a quarter of a century earlier. Recent developments in methods of production were reported to have reduced the time required to perform a particular operation, the raw material consumed, and the man-hours involved. Fuses which in the last war were made from bar-metal are now stamped, with a saving of twenty per cent in the material required.

In large measure, too, the equipment of the industrial establishments was found to require but little alteration to fit it for the needs of war. A factory which had been devoted to the production of enamel tins was switched over with little trouble to the making of cartridge cases. A tremendous reservoir of machine tools suitable for the making of fuses was found ready to hand in the factories, and the industry speedily planned a vast increase in output.

Strange places were these wartime factories—these temples of the War God in modern Britain. Some were established in the environs of great cities, others were hidden away in country towns and villages. Some bore names which have their place in English history; here were made the cannon which roared from the decks of wooden men-o'-war and the guns with which the redcoats blasted the enemy on many a hard-fought field. Some came into existence during the Great War, and since the Armistice had languished until this new war—or revival of the old—made them resound once again with the bustle of armament-making. Others were new to the tasks of war, converted overnight from the production of the articles of peaceful commerce to that of shells and fuses and military instruments.

Visitors from the outside world were amazed at the vastness of the organization, the complexity of the processes, the superlatively high standard aimed at and achieved in the finished product. They plunged from the light of day into huge structures of cement and steel and corrugated iron, whose darkness was shot by the flames from a score of mighty furnaces. They moved gingerly amongst the cranes and chains reaching down from the roof and stepped aside hurriedly as red-hot ingots slithered across the cobbled floor. They watched with fascinated eyes the foundrymen who managed with such consummate ease the masses of molten metal—big-framed men, dressed in dungarees, wide open at the neck, with little round hats that once were white on their heads and their feet sunk in mighty heat-resisting clogs.

They watched great cauldrons of seething metal from which streamed cascades of sparks; they saw bars of red-hot iron sliced into lengths with the ease of a grocer cutting cheese on his counter; they held in their hands plates of brass, which in a brief space would be drawn out by ingenious machinery into shell cases, and ran their fingers through heaps of cartridges in embryo. They stood by as liquid nickel was poured into shell moulds; and then moved on to where, by the application of a lever, a weight of 3,000 tons was brought to bear on a huge mass of semi-molten iron which was already assuming the unmistakable appearance of a naval gun. They flung a glance into the interior of the electric furnace, a white-hot inferno disclosed by the opening of a flame-licked door: and could hardly tear themselves away from the machines which with uncanny skill subjected every round of small-arm ammunition to a ninefold examination.



**OUTSIZE IN BINOCULARS**

**Giant binoculars, similar to the pair seen above, were manufactured for the Royal Navy by one of the largest firms of optical instrument makers in Britain, which produces binoculars, telescopes and photo-lenses.**

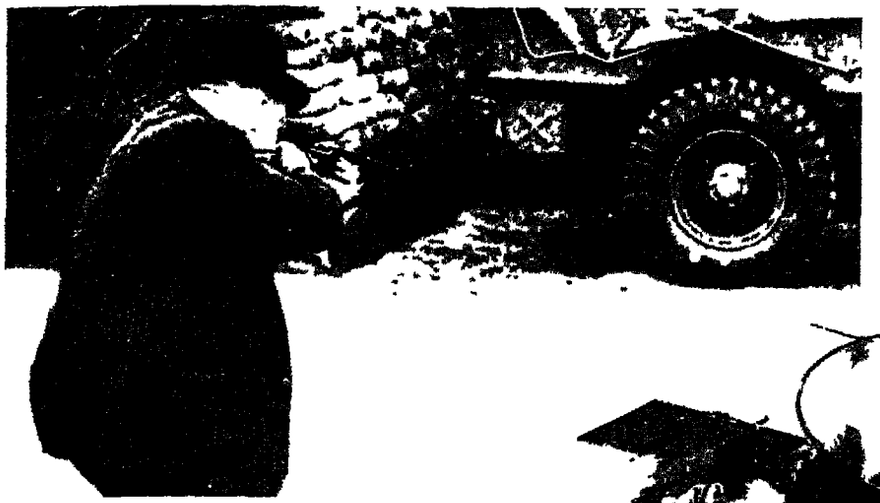
*Photo, Fox*

They were quickly made to understand that examination was an unending process in the ordnance factories. Through the great workshops, in every shed and every bay, moved the official examiners—army officers chosen for the work after long and difficult training, supported by a corps of civilian examiners, many of whom as ex-servicemen knew exactly what might be demanded of the weapons in the actual conditions of modern warfare. The Inspection Department of the Ministry of Supply was, indeed, very much in evidence. Every now and again the examiners ordered away a shell for firing on the proof butts, or a sample of small-arms ammunition. They stood by and watched with eyes ever alert the various stages through which all the products passed.

Amazing to the onlookers was the care bestowed on every shell of a mighty batch. They followed its course as it passed down the bench and was subjected to this test and that. They saw it gauged and weighed, measured for length and thickness, tested with hammer-taps for quality, peered into by the light of little electric lamps lowered into its glittering interior. At last it emerged from the barrage of scrutiny, marked all over with the cabbalistic signs of the examiners: fifty tests had to be passed with flying colours before the shell was allowed to leave the workshop for the filling room.

**Testing the Product**

Everywhere there was displayed the same fever of activity, the same wonder of machinery, the same resolve that the soldier should have good reason to put the most implicit trust in his weapon, whether that weapon was his rifle or revolver, machine-gun or 25-pounder, anti-tank rifle or anti-aircraft gun, or some great monster of the siege artillery. Nothing was left to chance; everything that could



**BULLET-PROOF TIRES**

**These tires, made for Army vehicles by a secret process, are so little damaged by hits from machine-gun or rifle bullets that the vehicle can continue at its normal speed. Above, firing a rifle at one of the tires for demonstration purposes.**

be done to ensure a hundred per cent efficiency was done.

In the mobilization of industrial resources the potentialities of modern science were not forgotten. Modern war is indeed a matter of machines, and in this war the mechanical element is far greater and more important than in the struggle of 1914–1918. In December it was announced that at one works alone there were being produced in a single day as many motor-lorries as the British Army possessed when the last war broke out. Similar progress was in evidence in the production of tanks, in spite of the fact that until 1936 there was no large-scale production of tanks in this country.

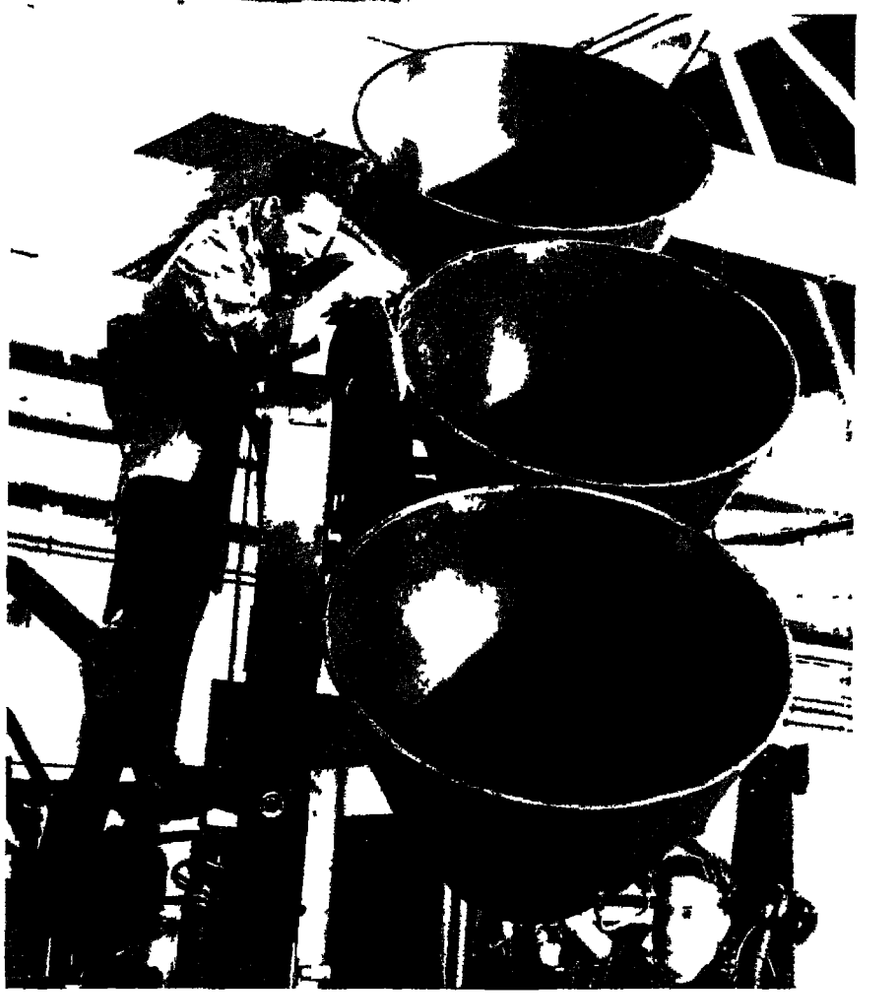
The Ministry of Supply was revealed as the world's biggest buyer of at least the heavier types of mechanized vehicles.

**Army on Wheels**

Among the wheeled vehicles required by the Ministry were motor-cycles, light and heavy cars, infantry trucks, machinery lorries, searchlight lorries, mobile offices and sterilizing plants, mobile laundries and laboratories, four-wheeled-drive field artillery tractors, anti-tank gun carriers, ambulances, mobile workshops, wireless trucks, water tanks, six-wheeled load carriers, winch lorries, and anti-aircraft tractors.

"In war," stated the Director of Mechanization, "demand is immensely expanded, and the element of surprise and change, with the consequent requirements of capacity for rapid adaptation of production, must be kept constantly in mind.... But adaptation is going on all the time, and already production of the heavier types of mechanical transport is proceeding here at a faster rate than anywhere else in the world, and the quality of our vehicles is the best in the world.

"As far as possible," he went on, "standard commercial components are used in the production of military vehicles, so that practically all the parts are interchangeable. Since the last war tires, especially for the heavier vehicles, have changed beyond recognition. Then lorries ran at 15 or 20 miles an hour on solid tires, and even at that speed tires sometimes burned out. Today lorries run at speeds up to 50 miles an hour on pneumatic tires. Nowhere in the world will you see better pneumatic tires than those now being made for the Ministry of Supply"—and it was now disclosed that this country was leading the world in the production of bullet-proof tires.

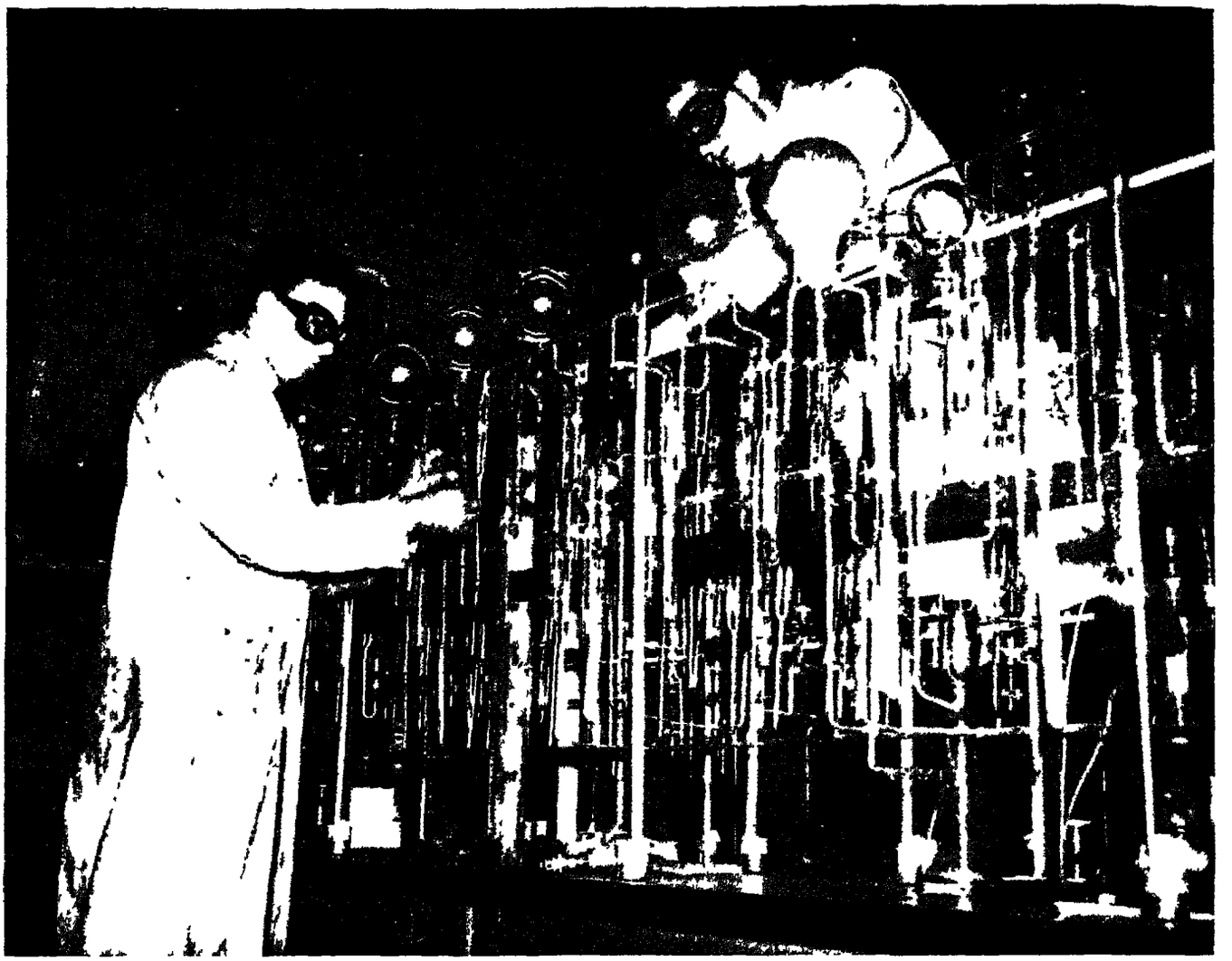


**EAR TRUMPETS OF THE A.A. DEFENCES**

**Above are the "ears" of a sound locator, which are used to detect the presence of aircraft long distances away. The complete machine consists of hundreds of intricate parts, and its manufacture is highly specialized work. The parts are made in various departments and assembled in another building.**

*Photos, Fox*

Arrangements were made for the turning out of huge quantities of military instruments—prismatic binoculars, epidiascopes, gun sights, fuse receivers, height- and range-finders, sound locators, telescopes, predictors, prisms, and the rest. In their production firms were enlisted whose fame in this department of industrial activity was world-wide, and, despite the employment of largely untrained labour, so skilled was the guidance, so willing and whole-hearted the co-operation



SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE OF WAR

**Compared with the group of 40 scientists engaged in research and experimental work for the War Office in 1914, the Directorate of Scientific Research of the Ministry of Supply had, in 1939, a permanent staff of about 800, in addition to the resources of scientific laboratories throughout the country. Above, two young chemists engaged in research work.**

*Photo, G.P.U.*

between private enterprise and the Ministry officials, that the output of first-class instruments was vastly increased. Thousands of prismatic compasses were turned out in the space of a few weeks from commencing mass production, and bulk delivery of mine covers was made within two weeks of receiving the order. And be it remembered that these goods are amongst the most complicated in the whole range of engineering production; a sound locator, for instance, consists of thousands of parts.

Even the discoveries of twentieth-century physics were employed to good purpose. Thus in the ears of the sound locator are electrical devices which indicate on a dial the arrival of the sound, so relieving the strain on the human ear. In these devices the work is performed by the indefatigable electron—that discovery of pure physics which seemed, of all the many strange things which have swum into our ken by way of the laboratory, to be the most remote from practical use.

Then the spider found itself famous for its contribution to Britain's war effort, when the Director of Ammunition Production called public attention to the fact that spiders' webs were used for graticules in Army binoculars; so uniform was the diameter of the thread that the spider must be classed amongst the most efficient of machines.

Besides shells and guns and instruments, there was mass production of uniforms. Thousands and thousands of girls were employed in making khaki clothing; most of them were quite new to the work, and many had been long unemployed. Now with all-electric machinery they made their contribution to the coat or greatcoat as it passed slowly before them on a conveyer belt. In one London factory 4,500 complete suits were turned out in a week; ere long the number would grow to 10,000. At another clothing factory where uniforms for special constables, A.F.S. and A.R.P. personnel were made side by side with the military khaki, there was in constant use an imposing array of busts, by means of which a good fit was made almost certainly possible. (It was found that in the last ten years the male waistline had been considerably reduced.) In this establishment 2,500 complete suits of battle-dress, 10,000 shirts, 6,000 forage caps, 2,500 suits of Service dress, and a large number of warrant officers' uniforms were produced each week. As an indication of the care for detail, it may be mentioned that forage caps were made in 20 sizes. In these clothing factories, as in those producing shells and guns, rigorous inspection was the rule. Each garment had to be passed by an

inspector of the Ministry of Supply before it was issued to the quartermasters. Proud, and rightly proud were those responsible for the organization when they were able to claim that within 36 hours of the material being cut in the workrooms the finished garment was on the way to the depot. When war broke out in September some half-dozen contractors were satisfying the Army's clothing needs; three months later the number had grown to over five hundred, not to mention an uncountable host of sub-contractors in all parts of the country.

Now for a word or two concerning the human element. "The man at the bench," said the Director-General of Ammunition Production, "does not have a very picturesque life, yet his service is of supreme importance, and just as much service to the country as is service in the front line." Working always at high pressure and often for long hours, toiling in the heat of the foundry, living in an atmosphere charged with danger—the men who made the guns and shells well deserved the encomiums that were not always quick in coming.

Skilled and unskilled, all were roped into the net. Even physical disability proved to be no bar—indeed, sometimes it was a definite advantage, as when deaf mutes were put to work in a shot-blasting room where all unaware of the clatter, they laboured methodically at cleaning and finishing the interior of the shells. Recruited from a deaf-and-dumb school in the neighbourhood, they were delighted at finding an opportunity of rendering their country a real service.

Women and girls were, of course, employed in large numbers, although in that early phase their share in the national effort had not assumed the proportions of a generation before. They assembled gas-masks and filled shells, handled cordite, gauged fuses, packed boxes of ammunition. They were found even in the danger areas of the explosives factories. Dressed in long overalls, mob caps and goloshes, they handled explosives so dangerous that mere rubbing would set them off. Monotonous work had no drawbacks for them and even in the noisiest shed they could still hear themselves sing.

This, then, was the way in which Britain's industry set itself to meet the clamant needs of war. In the course of a few weeks a huge proportion of the nation's man-power and capital equipment was switched over to military production. "The war" said Mr. Leslie Burgin in the House of Commons on September 21, "will be a war of surprises, a war in which it will be absolutely essential to have elasticity of mind and great daring. It will throw up problems of its own. There will be new inventions, new methods of attack and defence, new weapons, and new discoveries in the realms of communication and chemical manufacture. How fortunate is this country in this regard!

**Switch-over to War**

"From industry generally, employers and workpeople, the fullest possible co-operation has been given. I have not personally known an instance of any hitch between employers and workers, not any instance of retardation or slowing down of production. The flow of raw materials, the willingness of workpeople, and the ability of managements are unstintingly at the service of the State."

### TAILORING ON THE LARGEST SCALE

**The tremendous increase in the size of Britain's army necessitated one of the biggest tailoring and outfitting jobs ever undertaken in a comparatively short time. Clothing factories all over the country worked at full pressure executing orders for the Ministry of Supply, and below is a room in a factory producing greatcoats**

*Photo, Sport & General*



# *Diary of the War*

## *NOVEMBER, 1939*

**November 1, 1939.** Holland proclaims state of siege in certain areas along frontiers and in military inundation zones. German heavy artillery begin shelling French fortifications and villages behind them. R.A.F. make reconnaissance flights over north-west Germany.

**November 2.** Two German aeroplanes brought down over Western Front. Germans using shock troops for raids on French lines. French patrols active between rivers Blies and Rhine.

**November 3.** Third series of talks between Russia and Finland begin. Roosevelt's Neutrality Bill passed by U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. Allied Contraband Control have now detained over 500,000 tons.

**November 4.** Huge orders for war supplies confirmed in America. Norwegian Admiralty announces that "City of Flint" has arrived at Haugesund and German prize crew has been interned. French ship "Baoule" reported sunk.

**November 5.** "City of Flint" reaches Bergen. German Government protest against release of vessel and internment of prize crew. All quiet on Western Front. Swedish Government protest against extension of German minefields along their coasts.

**November 6.** Nine enemy aircraft brought down over Western Front in fight between 27 German and nine French fighters. King Leopold arrives at The Hague to confer with Queen Wilhelmina. R.A.F. aircraft secure valuable photographs over western Germany.

**November 7.** Queen Wilhelmina and King Leopold issue joint appeal for peace and offer their services as mediators. Admiralty announces engagement in North Sea between certain of our light forces and German aircraft. No ship damaged. Air Ministry announces air actions over North Sea. Enemy aircraft approaches Shetlands but is driven off.

**November 8.** Attempt made on Hitler's life by bomb explosion in Munich Buergerbrau beer-cellar, where, shortly before, he was making a speech. New Zealand pilot in France brings down German machine after duel at height of five miles. In fight over North Sea between three German and two British aircraft, one Heinkel seaplane is shot down. Three German attacks on Western Front repulsed.

**November 9.** Anxiety caused by great German activity near Dutch frontier. Increased activity between Rhine and Moselle. Nazi press accuses Britain of responsibility for Munich bomb explosion.

**November 10.** R.A.F. fighters destroy enemy flying-boat off East Coast. Admiralty announces that H.M.S. "Rover" must be considered lost with crew of 27. Holland starts flooding inundation areas.

**November 11.** The Queen broadcasts message to women of the Empire. R.A.F. fly over south-west Germany. Enemy aircraft fly over north-east France. Germany repeats assurance that neutrality of Holland and Belgium will be respected.

**November 12.** The King and French President reply to Dutch–Belgian peace appeal. Soviet Government issues statement of dissatisfaction with Finnish negotiations.

**November 13.** Two air attacks made on Shetlands; bombs are dropped but do no damage. German machines reach Paris but are driven off. Air activity on both sides of Western Front. Finnish delegation leave Moscow without any agreement being reached. British steamer "Ponzano" reported torpedoed.

**November 14.** Admiralty announces loss through German mine of H.M.S. "Blanche," and of trawler "Cresswell" by U-boat shelling. Norwegian tanker "Arne Kjode" reported torpedoed.

**November 15.** Ribbentrop informs Belgian Ambassador and Dutch Minister in Berlin that, as a result of "blunt rejection" of peace appeal by Britain and France, Germany considers matter closed. British steamer "Woodtown" reported mined.

**November 16.** British ship "Africa Shell" sunk by German raider off Portuguese East Africa. British steamer "Arlington Court" torpedoed.

**November 17.** Enemy 'plane flies over north-west England, and another over Shetlands. No bombs dropped. Nine Czech students executed following riots in Bohemia. Czech universities closed down for three years.

**November 18.** Martial law declared in Prague and other Czech towns. Dutch liner "Simon Bolivar" sunk by German mine. Enemy aircraft reported off East Coast and Firth of Forth area.

**November 19.** Six enemy aircraft sighted off South-East Coast, and others over Firth of Forth area. Grenade attacks on Western Front. British steamer "Pensilva" torpedoed. Five more ships reported sunk by German mines: British "Blackhill" and "Torchbearer"; Swedish "B. O. Borjesson"; Italian "Grazia"; and Yugoslav "Carica Milica." Lithuanian vessel "Kaunas" reported sunk by mine near Zeebrugge. Reported that 120 Czech students have been executed following riots on Independence Day.

**November 20.** German air raiders, seen over South-East England, are chased out to sea by British fighters. One Heinkel bomber shot down. Enemy 'plane appears over Orkneys. German machines fly over wide area of France. British trawler "Wigmore" reported sunk.

**November 21.** H.M.S. "Rawalpindi" sunk off coast of Iceland by "Deutschland" and another enemy warship. Gestapo announces arrest of man alleged to be responsible for Munich explosion, and of two British "confederates." H.M.S. "Gipsy" strikes mine off East Coast, but is later beached. Japanese liner "Terukuni Maru" mined. Premier announces blockade reprisals for Germany's violations of marine law. R.A.F. fighters shoot down a Dornier 17 off Deal. Enemy aircraft appear over East Coast, Sutherland and Orkneys. Minesweeper "Mastiff" reported mined. Air engagements over Western Front in which several enemy 'planes are shot down. Three trawlers, "Thomas Hankins," "Delphine" and "Sea Sweeper," reported sunk by enemy action.

**November 22.** France decides upon reprisal measures against German sea warfare. Six German aircraft make bombing attack on Shetlands; R.A.F. seaplane at its moorings set on fire. Enemy aircraft appear over East Coast and Thames estuary. Nazi 'plane shot down off South-East Coast. Six German aircraft shot down by Allied 'planes over French territory, another by anti-aircraft fire. Paris announces two U-boats sunk by French torpedo-boat.

**November 23.** Admiralty states that minesweeper "Aragonite" has been mined. Proved that mines have been dropped by parachute from German seaplanes over Thames estuary and S.E. coastal waters. Six vessels reported sunk by enemy action around British coasts: British steamers "Geraldus," "Lowland," "Darino," and trawler "Sulby"; Greek steamer "Elena R."; French trawler "Saint-Claire." R.A.F. in France bring down seven enemy bombers. Steamer "Hookwood" mined.

**November 24.** Enemy aircraft make two raids over Shetlands. No bombs dropped. British steamer "Mangalore" mined. Paris announces that small submarine chaser has sunk a U-boat.

**November 25.** Two bombing attacks by German aircraft are made on H.M. ships in North Sea. No hits obtained. Enemy aircraft seen over Orkneys and Shetlands. R.A.F. fly over north-west Germany, including Heligoland. German liner "Adolph Woermann" scuttled.

**November 26.** Polish liner "Pilsudski," under charter to British Navy, sunk by U-boat. Russia alleges "incident" on frontier in Karelian Isthmus, and demands withdrawal of troops.

**November 27.** Finnish Government deny "incident," but suggest mutual withdrawal of troops. Paris reports local artillery and infantry engagement east of Moselle. Dutch liner "Sparndam" mined.

**November 28.** R.A.F. fighters attack with machine-guns five seaplanes lying at their base at Borkum, Friesian Islands. Soviet Government denounces Treaty of Non-Aggression with Finland and alleges two more incidents on frontier. British steamers "Uskmouth" and "Rubislaw" sunk by enemy action.

**November 29.** Enemy bomber shot down by British fighter off Northumbrian coast. Two British patrols bring down Dornier seaplane over North Sea. Russia severs diplomatic relations with Finland. British steamer "Ionian" sunk.

**November 30.** Soviet Union attacks Finland by land, sea and air. Finnish Government resigns. Enemy aircraft chased out to sea north of Firth of Forth. Paris reports that French torpedo-boat has sunk a U-boat. British steamer "Sheaf Crest" mined.

# *SOME SIDELIGHTS ON GERMANY IN WARTIME*

It is seldom that the Nazi censorship allows the world any direct indication of the privations and sorrows endured by the cowed German people. We print below excerpts from speeches to the populace, made by three leaders, which reveal not only the increasing misery of living conditions in that country, but also the usual misapprehensions regarding Britain's outlook and aims.

FIELD-MARSHAL GOERING IN A SPEECH TO ARMAMENT WORKERS, SEPTEMBER 11, 1939:

WHEN I started the Four-Year Plan I did it with the object of forming a protection that cannot be defeated, and today I can say that Germany is the best armed State in the world. We possess all that we need to defeat our enemies. They have more gold, copper, and lead, but we have more workers, more men. That is decisive. And our production of aeroplanes and guns is still far greater than that of our enemies. . . .

I know there are many things that will get worse. There is, for example, the question of substitute materials. I admit that the suit of substitute material is not so good as a real one, especially since we have made the latest fibre from the potato plant. But that is not the point. It is no longer a question of the life of the individual but of the nation. I know that war soap is not as good as peace soap and often there is no soap at all. But then we must just have dirty hands. . . .

I can understand how depressed many of you are when you think of the World War. And many say that it will be the same again as it was then. But the situation is not the same. Great Britain has not succeeded in inflaming the whole world against us. We want nothing from the French. We shall defend our frontiers like iron, but we shall not attack.

I must ask hard and difficult sacrifices of you. You must understand that it cannot be otherwise. You must also understand that at the beginning everything does not go as well as it should. The most important thing is bread, and we have seen to it that there is enough. Of meat, it can be said that we eat far too much of it in any case. With less meat we shall get thinner and so need less material for a suit. That is an advantage.

You shall always be told the truth in this war. Maybe that at the front there is a serious reverse—that must not be hidden from you. If listening to foreign radio stations is heavily punished, it is not because we fear them but because it is dishonourable to listen to the dirty tirades of foreign countries.

HERR HESS IN A BROADCAST TO GERMAN MOTHERS, OCTOBER 1, 1939:

WE should be thankful to those of you who wear the cross of honour for bearing many children. We should be thankful to mothers whose children have permitted Germany to maintain her existence and greatness. We know how hard it is for young wives to know that their menfolk are in the field, but German mothers and wives are proud of their sons and husbands who have paraded in field grey, gone to the front, and answered the roll-call in full knowledge of their duty. . . .

Those mothers who have lost their husbands and sons, or those whose husbands were killed in the last war and whose sons are fighting in the new war, will receive a special cross of honour.

German women, you had to give up the life to which you were accustomed. You have had to restrict yourselves in many spheres of life. Some of you are serving at posts of danger. You must realize that the Fuehrer must claim all this of you to secure your life and the life of your people. England has forced a war on us.

England has not believed many things. English people do not believe that Russia has offered us her fertile lands, her materials. England has not believed many things in the past. They did not believe that National Socialism could come to power. They did not believe we could build a big army. They did not believe we could build great motor roads. They did not believe we could wipe out unemployment.

Today England must believe all this, and one day, provided she does not make peace before, she will have to believe that it is impossible for her to starve us, the more since Russia is with us.

HERR HITLER IN A SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF THE WINTER RELIEF FUND, OCTOBER 10, 1939:

ONE has become accustomed to the fact that the man-in-the-street has, more or less willingly, contributed to the winter relief work. I say more or less. The great majority show more willingness; it is only a small minority who show less.

We want to give each individual an insight into the real misery of many of the people. Every individual must realize that fortune and wealth have not come to all of us, nor will they.

There has always been misery; there is misery today; there will always be misery.

Now Fate has compelled us to take up arms for the safety of our Reich. We do not know what the future has in store for us, but there is no Power in the world which can again bring us to our knees. . . .

Before us is the eternal destiny of the German people. We are not alarmed about how long it will take to realize our aims. Nothing can turn us aside, nothing can stop us realizing our destiny. Whatever the others choose they shall have.

The firmer our determination to accept all sacrifices the more certain shall we be of obtaining the peace needed by the German nation.

I entreat the helpers to work along the lines I have indicated and I entreat the German people to assist the helpers and so help to repair the wrongs done to them in 1914–1918.

HERR HITLER IN A SPEECH IN THE BUERGERBRAU BEER CELLAR, MUNICH, NOVEMBER 8, 1939:

. . . WE have built up an army of which there is no equal in the world, and this army is backed by a people of such compact unity as is unparalleled in history; and above this army and this people there is a Government with fanatical will-power similarly without precedent. . . .

What they [the British] hate is the Germany which constitutes a bad example. They hate a communal Germany. They hate the Germany of the abolition of class distinction. They hate the Germany which has achieved all this. They hate the Germany which during the past seven years has made every effort to create for her nationals an adequate standard of living. . . .

They hate the Germany of welfare for the younger generation. They hate the strong Germany which marches forward. . . . Their struggle is a struggle against a free and sound Germany, and our struggle is a struggle for the establishment of a sound and strong community of people, and for the security of this community against the rest of the world. . . .

Today we are standing at the crossroads of history. Germany has changed completely. . . . There were things in Germany which confronted us when we were only a party, and which as a mere party we succeeded in overcoming. Today we are in power. Our will today is as unshakable in the struggle against the outside world as it was in the struggle which we carried on as a party at home. . . .

The sacrifice made by the first sixteen men of our party was not more valuable than the deaths of those who have died now. We shall never forget this. Millions of the German people have fallen in the course of time, and every one must know that the sacrifice he makes is just as valuable as that of those who sacrificed themselves before and will [illegible] the future.

Chapter 33

# INSIDE GERMANY DURING THE FIRST FOUR MONTHS: WHAT NEUTRAL OBSERVERS SAW

*How Long Could Germany Hold Out?—Her Precarious Finances—Fantastic Economic Devices —The Human Side of Her Problem—'Unruhen und Unzufriedenheit,' an American Observer's Testimony—A German Family Evening—Clothing Shortage—Signs of Economic Deterioration —Propaganda to Sustain Morale—Would the Catholic Church be the Next Scapegoat?*

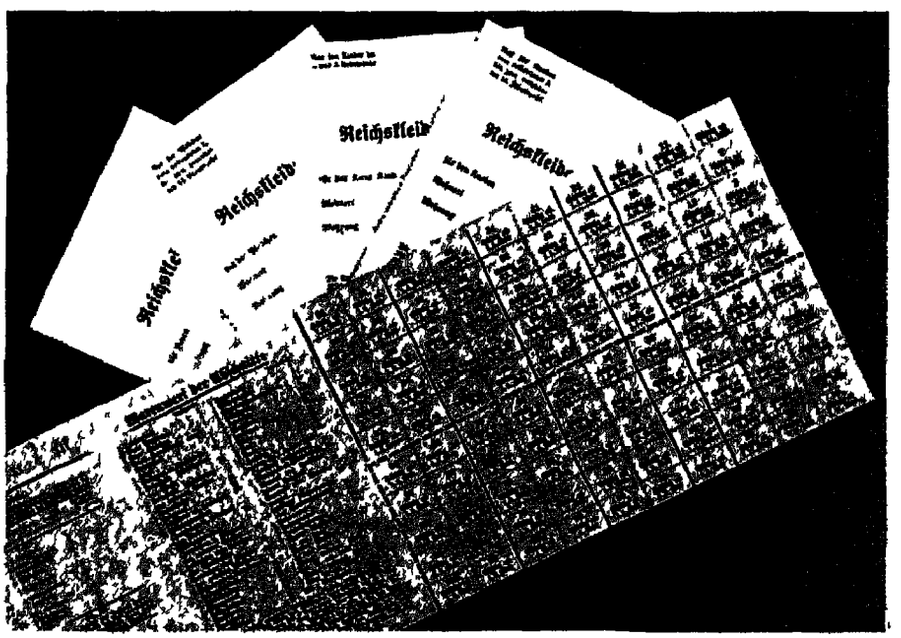
SPECULATIONS were rife at the beginning of hostilities as to the probable duration of the war. The question implied how long it would be before German power was broken. Very few people entertained the possibility of Germany's victory, though some there were who produced reasons for believing that a stalemate must result. Basing their optimistic belief on economic statistics, or on the opinions of those who had studied them, many people expected the war to be over within six months. Others retorted that the former were jumping too hastily to a wished-for conclusion, as many did in 1914, when the general expectation was that the war would be "over by Christmas." To this the optimists of 1939 made an immediate tu quoque, and insisted that such arguments ignored the big difference in conditions in 1914, when Germany was relatively far better off for waging a war against the Western Allies.

One of the lessons of the war of 1914–1918 was the importance of propaganda. Used effectively, it helped to sustain morale at home and to undermine that of the enemy, besides influencing the sympathies of the neutrals. The European dictatorships had improved upon the wartime practice of nationalist propaganda by deliberately suppressing inconvenient news and the freedom of political discussion, thus placing the majority of the population (especially the young) more at the mercy of the State teachings. The German Fuehrer, by this dangerous and immoral form of statecraft, had achieved his political triumphs, and when he could no longer get any results without fighting, it was to be expected that the great Nazi propaganda machine would be working at high pressure throughout the war.

The main arguments of German propaganda in the early phase of the war are described in a later chapter, and what we have to consider here is the function of that propaganda as one of the important elements of German resistance. It failed as an offensive weapon intended to split the Allies, though there may have remained some responsive element of resentment and defeatism among the democratic peoples which it might still be able to reach. As a defensive weapon, behind the shield of the rigid German censorship, propaganda could be wielded with the unscrupulous cunning of the Nazi leaders.

How important to them must have been any means of strengthening the morale of the German people, if only by inducing them to hate their "enemies," is demonstrated by the insoluble nature of the problems that confronted the Nazi Government that had stumbled into a great war. Those problems were mainly economic, but in modern warfare that meant military as well. The truth was that Germany had begun to suffer seriously from war strain some years before the war with France and Britain had actually started, and many of the facts of the situation at the end of the summer of 1939 seemed to justify the most optimistic expectations of a speedy collapse of the German war machine, in spite of the British Government's announcement that their plans would be laid in anticipation of the war lasting for three years at least.

**Nazis' Problems**




GERMAN CLOTHING CARDS

**Articles of clothing were rationed in Germany soon after the outbreak of war. Above is one of the "Reichskleiderkarten," the German clothing ration cards. On the left of it is a table of articles with the number of coupons needed for each. For a pocket handkerchief, for example, one coupon must be given up; for a pair of pyjamas, 25.**

*Photo, Central Press*

Financially, the situation of Germany made a bad contrast with that of 1914. In 1914 her foreign investments alone, giving purchasing power for necessary imports, amounted to somewhere about £1,000,000,000, and she also had gold and many other important commodities in big stocks. But in 1939 her holdings of foreign investments, of gold, and a long list of essential commodities which could only be obtained through imports were very low. Towards the end of August 1939, for example, the Reichsbank returns showed gold holdings and foreign currency of less than seven million Reichsmarks, while the notes in circulation had a face value of at least 120 times that amount, and this was enormously expanded during the first few months of the war.

No foreign country could afford to accept Reichsbank paper money for goods, and, in fact, most of the neutral countries of Europe were big creditors of Germany. Even little Switzerland



**HOME-PRODUCED FUEL FOR GERMANY**

Germany's preoccupation with the problem of petrol supplies in wartime led to a great increase in her home production of synthetic motor spirit. In this picture, reproduced from the "Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung," tank wagons are being filled at a German plant for the production of synthetic oil fuels

was owed about £100,000,000. These debts could be paid only by manufactured goods, and until they were paid Germany could not buy any more goods unless she paid cash or bought them by barter. And yet it was essential for Germany to continue making large purchases. These figures, bad as they were for Germany, show but a fraction of the picture of Germany's state of bankruptcy in 1939. In spite of very heavy direct and indirect taxation of incomes and of the luxuries and necessities of the people, there was an incredible and probably incalculable quantity of other dishonoured paper promises in the form of various kinds of bonds and loan certificates, the result of the Hitler regime's policy for several years previously of gambling on the future, and raising fresh forced loans when older ones became payable. The normal peacetime industrial business of the country had been crippled, and much of the wealth amassed by the big magnates like Thyssen, at the expense of the people, under the misnamed National Socialist regime, had either been taken out of Germany or had been appropriated by inefficient Government departments.

With ten hours as a general minimum of daily work for seven days a week, the German workman's wages had been "stabilized" for some years before the war, and with the war came wage reductions forced on the employees, who had been driven to compete for labour. The wage reductions and the compulsory overwork tended to reduce production, and increased output in the industries connected with armaments was obtained only by the most rigid "slave-driving" and the increase of employed men. The result for many thousands of private firms not engaged in the war industries was bankruptcy, for these firms were also being starved of the materials they needed. The situation had become so bad by December 1939, that to avert complete chaos a Government Credit Company was started which would make State loans to save tottering firms who could not obtain normal bank credits. The quite unsound but unavoidable State loans were described as intended to help the firms that were in difficulty "owing to stoppage of output, shortage of raw materials, delay in receiving payment, lack of labour or confiscation," an altogether depressing list of business troubles.

Owing probably to discontent among the workers and to a consequent drop in output the German government found it necessary, towards the end of 1939, to reduce hours of labour and to restrict the employment of women. Thus the "driving" of the workers soon turned out to be of little avail.

Germany's power-politics had involved her in fantastic economic devices, designed to gain a "self-sufficiency" which could never be fully realized, and bound to collapse when once a blockade began. The extent of her dependence upon imports was far greater than she could afford in a big war against wealthy Powers, and the consequences of her economic weakness had been serious in the country's domestic life even before the war began. This circumstance, too, was foreseen both in Germany and outside and strengthened the belief in an early collapse, due to the strain of war, of a character not unlike the revolutionary movement that took control of Germany at the end of the war of 1914–18.

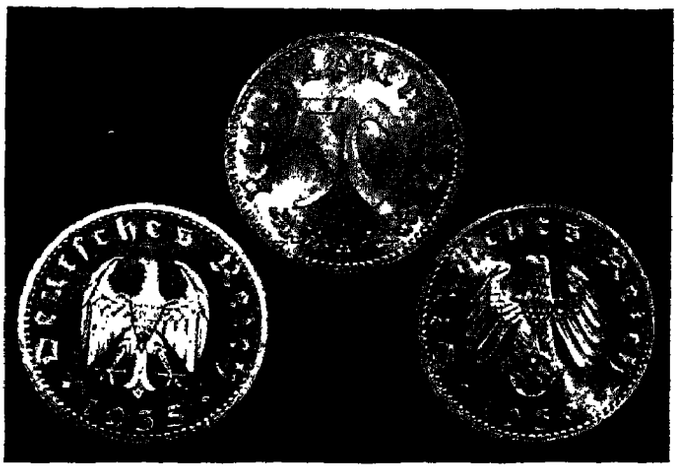
**Effect of Blockade**



**GUARDING VITAL INDUSTRIES**

Owing to the fear of sabotage, all German works, such as factories, mines, etc., were strongly guarded. Above, a German miner is talking to a soldier on duty at a coal-mine

*Photo, Keystone*



NEW COINS SAVE NAZI NICKEL

To conserve her stocks of nickel, needed for ammunition, Germany replaced her nickel coinage by aluminium, the nickel coins being withdrawn from circulation and melted down. The aluminium 50-pfennig pieces are seen above. The one on the left was minted as early as 1935.

*Photo, International Graphic Press*

It was realized that inside Germany, in spite of all the efforts of Dr. Goebbels' propaganda department and of the false speeches of the Nazi leaders, there must be a big volume of discontent and resentment against the regime which had again plunged the nation into a war with France and Britain. It was remembered also that there were large minorities in Germany who were politically opposed to the Nazis long before the war, and they had been reinforced by the disillusioned Austrians and the oppressed and despoiled people of Czechoslovakia. Austrian and Czech disturbances and an underground political campaign against the Nazi tyranny gave the Gestapo plenty of work. Then, too, the wretched people of enslaved Poland required an extension of the German police organization.

If we look more closely at the human side of the problem in Germany, the view that her defeat was inevitable is strengthened, and some justification can be seen for the belief held in the autumn of 1939 that she must suffer some measure of internal collapse at an early date. The rationing of the population, which had made practically no difference to the peoples of France and Britain up to 1940, had been severe in Germany from the beginning of the war, and indeed from before the war as regards foods like butter and meat and important military requirements such as petrol. Even before the war started the internal combustion engine for civil transport had been generally run on gas, for coal was one of the very few important raw materials which Germany produced largely in proportion to her needs. But it was known that industrial plant and rolling stock, owing to the pressure of the Four-Year Plan and the ever-increasing devotion of resources to armaments, stood in great need of renewals and overhauling. And though Germany's internal supplies of iron ore were normally adequate for her industry, her maximum output had probably been reached early in 1939, and she had scanty internal supplies of manganese (though she now had control of sources in Czechoslovakia), without which certain steels could not be made. That even the iron supplies were inadequate for the colossal needs of the war was revealed by a decree issued early in December. This ordered the demolition and requisitioning of all the gas and electric lamp-posts, metal showcases, iron doors, window shutters, and even name plates and enamelled advertising signs.

"Peace is what almost everyone lives and prays for," declared Mr. O. G. Villard, the American journalist who spent a month in Germany in the autumn, and recorded his impressions in the "Daily Telegraph" (afterwards published in book form by Constable & Co., Ltd.). He was referring to the remarkable demonstration of joy over the false peace rumours (described in Chapter 17, page 163) broadcast by a hoax from a German station on October 10.

"The very first conversation I had in Germany," he wrote, "was with two women workers, who astounded me by asking if there was as much unrest and discontent (*Unruhen und Unzufriedenheit*) among the workers in England as in Germany. They also gave me the assurance that there were more Communists in Hanover than ever before. One uniformed official of many years' service, a veteran of the last war, asked me where the United States stood in the present struggle. I replied: 'We are 95 per cent opposed to your Government.' He answered without an instant's hesitation: 'I honour you for that!' He then proceeded to voice his hostility to the Government—to me, a complete stranger—with a bitterness and violence that would have landed him in prison had he been overheard. That he knew his danger was plain when he tapped one of the walls of the room and said: 'These have ears here.'"

According to Mr. Villard, other Americans had similar experience of outspokenness by discontented German citizens, which revealed the necessity for the regime to use its vast system of police espionage to the utmost, and its strict decrees against even picking up leaflets dropped from the air, or against listening to the foreign news broadcasts or the ubiquitous and irrepressible secret wireless station which had been denouncing the Nazi leaders.

Discussing the food situation in his interesting record, Mr. Villard wrote:

"I went to the workers' quarters in the north of Berlin, where trouble usually starts when anything goes wrong. I found that the shops were plentifully supplied with

**Severe Straits**



WHERE GERMANY CAME OFF THE RAILS

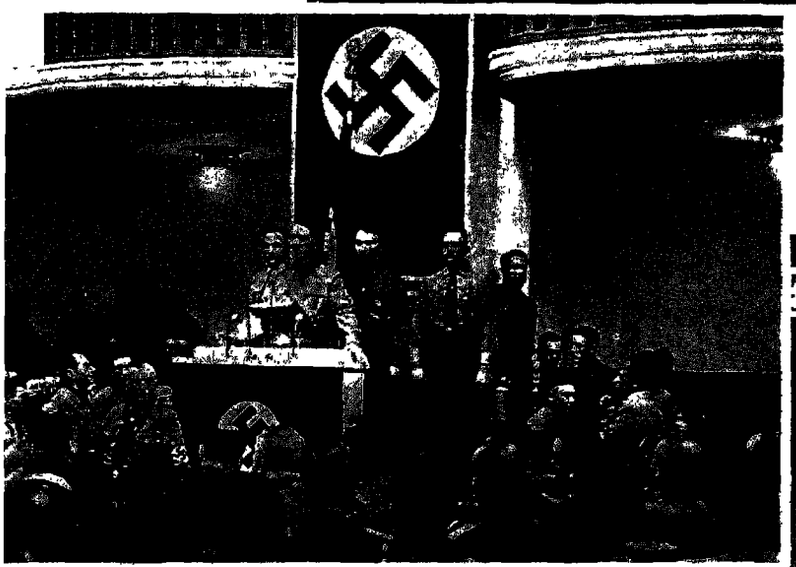
*Photo, Krystone*

During the closing months of 1939 a series of railway accidents in Germany were accompanied by heavy loss of life. They were attributed mainly to lack of trained operatives and to the defective condition of much of Germany's rolling stock. Above, a German goods train that has been involved in a collision.

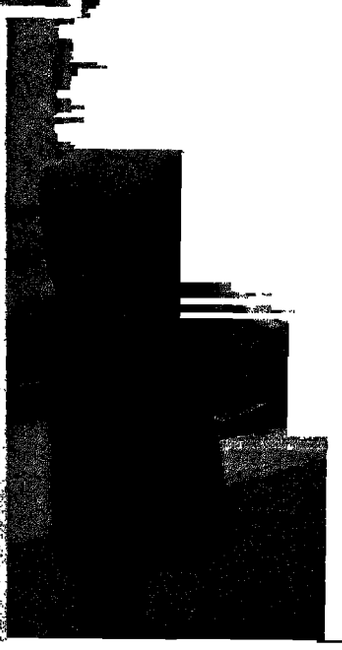
## MYSTERY OF MUNICH BOMB

On November 8, 1939, at a quarter-past nine at night, Hitler left the Buergerbrau Keller in Munich after having made a speech. At nine thirty-five a violent explosion killed and wounded many of those who had been listening to him. An attack against Hitler? A manoeuvre to increase the Fuehrer's popularity? The vengeance of the Reichswehr? It may be long before history provides the answer. On the right experts are searching the debris for the mechanism of the bomb. Below, Hitler addressing a meeting in this famous brasserie, where the Nazi party used to meet in its early days.









## VICTIMS AND VICTIMIZED

Hitler attended the funeral on November 11 of the victims of the Munich bomb explosion. The ceremony took place, as seen below, at the Munich Feldherrnhalle. On Hitler's right is Adolf Wagner, Gauleiter of Bavaria. Below, left, is Georg Elser, charged by the Gestapo with having placed the bomb in the Buergerbrau. How he managed to elude the close supervision of the police was not explained.

*Photos, International Graphic Press; Wide World; Keystone*

fruit, meat and vegetables, but, of course, meat can only be purchased on the presentation of a card, and there has been great grumbling among the workers in heavy industry that a pound per week is not enough. The Government have met this by announcing that by December there will be three pounds.

"Similarly, it is promised that the number of eggs shall be six per person per month, as against the one a week now available, and the quantity of milk for children has also been increased. Much of the fruit offered in these shops in the working-man's quarters would hardly have been saleable in London, but at the market in the Wittenbergplatz, in the west of Berlin, where many well-to-do people shop, the quality of everything was excellent, and there was plenty of cheese to be had. The only queue was at the fish-stands, and that was due to the fact that you could not buy fish until your name and address were entered into a book.

"Despite the German's love of regulations he does resent not being able to buy clothes or shoes without presenting a card. In Berlin the rationing system is working beautifully, but that is not the case in Southern Germany. There is great complaint at delays and long queues in Munich (I also heard the same charge made at Hanover), and I do not doubt the report that there has been serious protest in Vienna, in which city no Jew, whether young or old sick or well, can draw a drop of milk—or, rather, the very thin fluid which passes for milk. The shortage of soap already troubles the housewife. What is given to them is 50 per cent pumice, and all sorts of stratagems are employed to economize—even at that. There is no doubt that the high standard of cleanliness of the Germans is deteriorating, as it did during the last war."

A revelation from a quite different angle was afforded by a sketch of an average German family which appeared in the "Voelkischer Beobachter" early in November. It represented the family spending the evening at home during the black-out.

While the father is reading his newspaper, the mother is looking through the rent book and wondering what sort of meal she can provide for the next "Sacrifice Sunday"; the young son and daughter promote the conversation that the "Voelkischer Beobachter" regarded as good reading for Germans:

THE BOY: "Mother, why must we have all the windows covered with black paper?"

THE MOTHER: "My son, we must be on our guard every day, every hour, every minute from enemy air attacks. Our Fuehrer says we mustn't leave our windows uncovered. But don't worry; they will be shot down long before they reach Berlin."

THE DAUGHTER: "We were told at school today that the enemy is more than 500 kilometres from Berlin. Teacher said we have nothing to fear."

THE MOTHER: "That is right, my daughter. Look, my dear, I am taking this coin from your money-box to help our brave soldiers at the front."

THE DAUGHTER: "But, Mother, that's a big coin!"

THE MOTHER: "Stupid girl! We'll do with a little less to eat this week. We must be prepared to make big sacrifices."

FATHER (looking up from his paper): "That's right, my children. Had we not been enticed away from our loyalty in 1917 by the Reds, we would not have had the stab in the back that lost us the war."

THE BOY: "Tell us about that again, Father!"

Food riots in Vienna during the autumn suggested a far more serious indignation about the shortage and the cumbrous and irksome rationing than this story for German consumption, or even Mr. Villard's view of a section of German life. The shortage of clothing materials also had grown much more serious by November. The German's ration book of 100 coupons for twelve months for articles of clothing limited purchases to the minimum necessary, and below the minimum for satisfaction, but even so in actual fact the citizen was lucky who could obtain as much as his coupons covered. German newspapers, to counteract discontent over the food shortage, had resorted to many lies about shortages abroad, including the publication of a picture of a queue of Swedes waiting for a State lottery office to open and sell tickets. This picture was described as a food queue in Sweden, showing how the neutrals were being starved by the Allies' ruthless contraband control.

Similarly, the reports issued from the British Ministry of Information about the shortage of clothes in Berlin were countered by the Deutschlandsender station's broadcast in English denying any such thing. Unfortunately for this propaganda, within a week the clothing shops had to be closed for several days owing to new regulations governing textiles and clothes. The shortage of leather and rubber had also resulted in prohibitive prices for footwear, and reports published in Paris from Czechoslovakia described the hardships in this respect of the Czechs, who had always been able to supply themselves well. The confiscated Bata factory, typical of the rest, was almost at a standstill and without stocks. The rubber over-shoes always worn in winter were quite unprocurable. In the supply of food, which again the Czechs had been used to in much more abundance than citizens of the Reich before the invasion of their country, conditions were worse than in Germany itself, and cured fat or lard, the mainstay of the Czechs' and Slovaks' domestic kitchen, had become too expensive for poor people to purchase.

**Feeble Denials**

One example will serve for many that show want of enthusiasm for the war and the resentment of the German people. The once popular Nazi Horst Wessel song was parodied verse by verse and repeated in the towns as a joke. It described Hitler and Goebbels as still waiting for a bullet (*noch immer nicht erschossen*). By the substitution of a few words, the opening of the song was changed from:

With banners high
In serried ranks and even,
The Brownshirts march
With steady stride and sure,

into

With prices high
And frontiers closed to freedom
Ruin stalks on
With steady stride and sure

All the signs pointed to rapid deterioration of the internal economy of

## RATIONING FOR WARTIME: GERMANY AND BRITAIN COMPARED

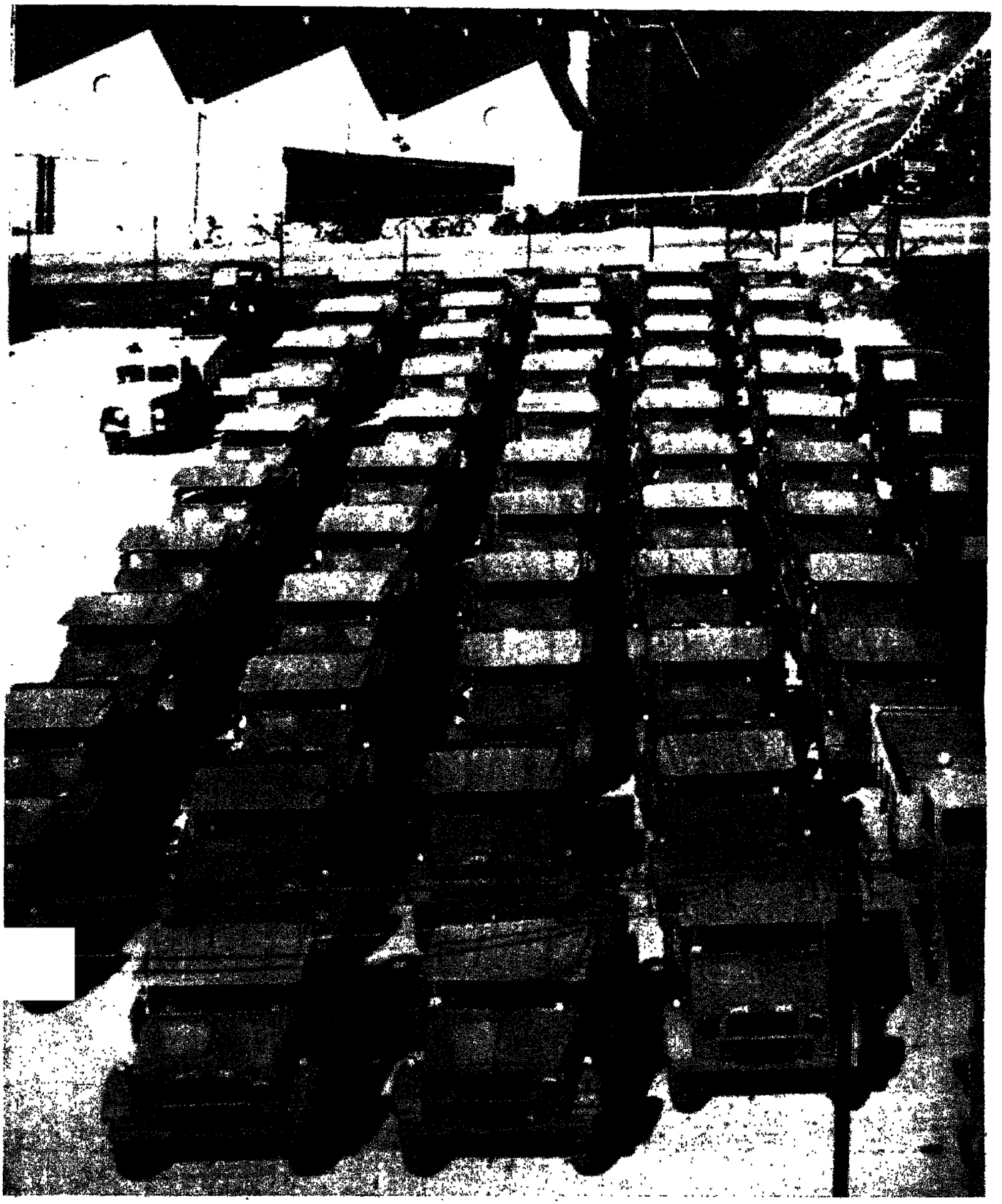
| | *War of* 1939 | | | *War of* 1914–18 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Germany, Dec. 1939 | Germany, pre-war consumption | Britain, normal consumption | Germany, ration 1916 | Germany, ration 1918 | Britain, ration 1918 |
| | per head per week | | | per head per week | | |
| Bread and flour .. | 5 lb. | 6·5 lb. | 6 lb. | 4·5 lb. | 4·5 lb. | Not rationed |
| Meat .. .. .. | 1·1 lb. | 2·2 lb. | 2·1 lb. | 0·7 lb. | 0·6 lb. | 1·25 lb. |
| Fats (butter, lard, margarine, oil, bacon) .. .. | 9·3 oz. | 16 oz. | 21 oz. | 4 oz. | 3 oz. | 12 oz. |
| Sugar .. .. .. | 0·7 lb. | 1 lb. | 1·8 lb. | 0·7 lb. | 0·5 lb. | 0·8 lb. |
| Milk .. .. .. | * | 3·5 pt. | 4 pt. | 1 pt. | None | Not rationed |
| Eggs .. .. .. | Only occasionally | 2 | 3 | 1 | None | Not rationed |
| Jam and marmalade | 3·5 oz. | 5 oz. | 6 oz. | 4 oz. | 3 oz. | 4 oz. |

* For children and sick persons only.

**Rationing of Soap in Germany.** The 1939 soap ration amounted to 0·75 oz. per head per month as compared with a pre-war consumption of 2 oz.

**Rationing of Textiles in Germany.** A hundred "textile units" per year were permitted for every adult in 1939, the value of one year's coupons being about £4. Below are some of the values in coupons that had to be surrendered in exchange for garments.

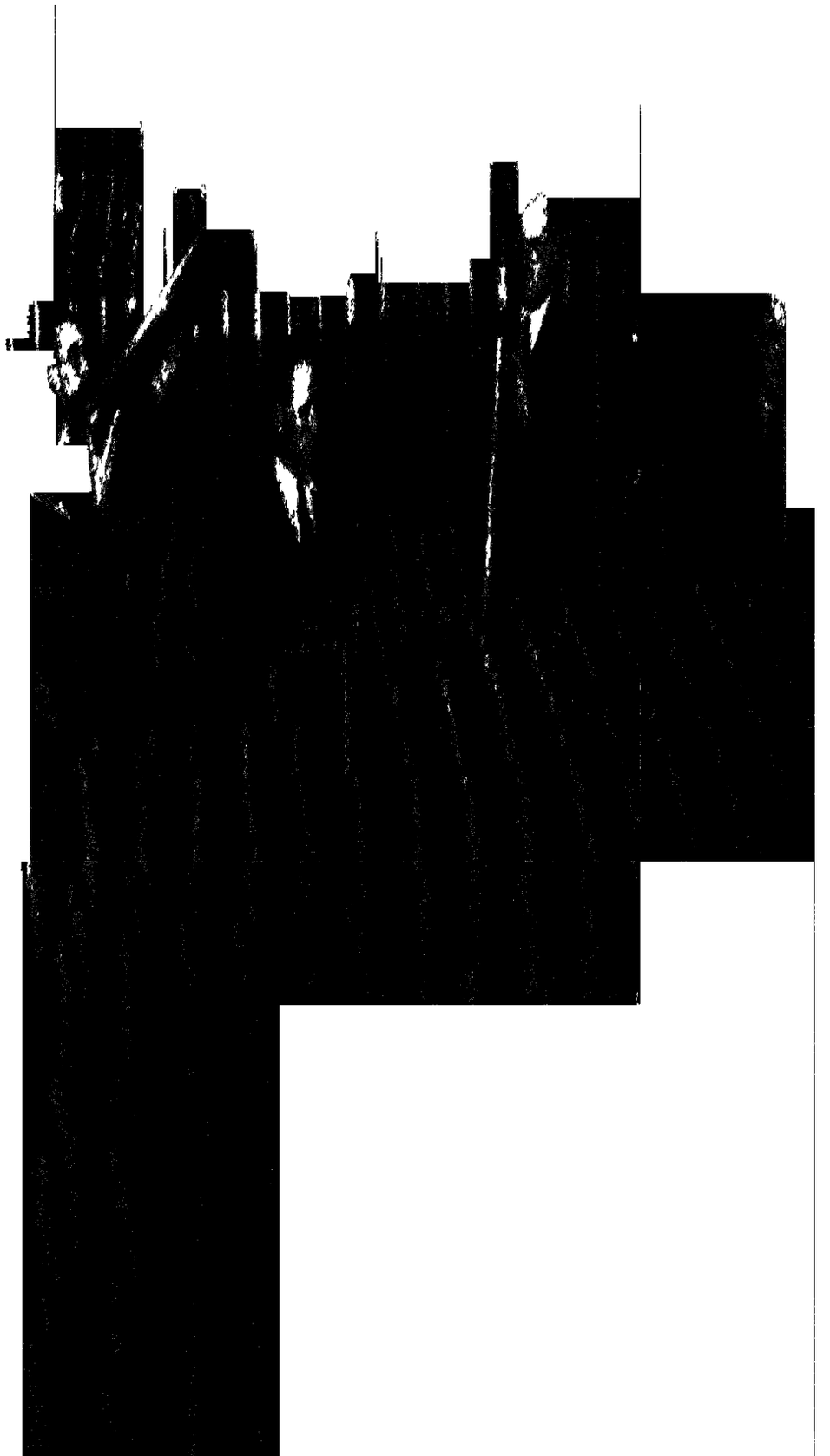
Suit, 60; Costume, 45; Winter coat, 45–50; Pyjamas, 25; Pullover, 20; Handkerchief, 1–2; Stockings, per pair, 4; Underwear per suit, 15.



## NEW TRUCKS FOR BRITAIN'S ARMY

Motor-car factories which before the war turned out luxurious limousines and domestic cars by the thousand concentrated on the production of trucks and lorries for the Army. Above is a batch of army vehicles ready to move off from one of Britain's well-known motor works. This batch represents but a part of one day's output.

*Photo, Associated Press*



**SHELL CASES FOR FREEDOM'S ARMY**

Here is a scene at a Royal Ordnance Factory where guns, shells and cartridges are turned out in enormous numbers for the Forces. After the outbreak of war the factory population, styled by the Ministry of Supply, in this particular group, are filling some of the vast output of shell cases required for the factory which worked at full pressure day and night.

*Photo, Pow*



**CHRISTMAS 'TREAT' FOR NAZI AIRMEN**

Hitler, it was reported, went to the Western Front during the Christmas of 1939, making a tour of inspection which included his personal S.S. bodyguard regiment, A.A. batteries, fortress garrisons, and reconnaissance squadrons. In the photograph above he is seen addressing the personnel of an aerodrome in the vicinity of the front during his tour.

*Photo, International Graphic Press*

Germany, whose most important prospect of relief had been the economic domination of the Balkans. This had been forestalled partly by the Soviet's invasion of south-eastern Poland, and increasingly thereafter by the British economic offensive, in which British agents in the Balkans offered fair prices and prompt payment for stocks of commodities needed by Germany. Without effective menaces, Germany could not hope to obtain what she needed from the Balkan countries. The financial position, as was to be expected, grew more serious as the war went on. During November the controlled German Press was publishing hopeful articles about how the Government was able to finance the war, but in fact the great increase of 50 per cent on the already heavy income tax that had been imposed on the outbreak of war had proved itself a failure, and the enormous short-term debt had greatly increased.

The Government had no prospect of meeting this, with the result that Germans were expecting before the end of November to see the confiscation of deposits in banks and savings banks and the reserves of insurance companies, such confiscation, of course, taking the form of another "conversion" into State loans, which would never be repaid. In spite of the severe restriction of home consumption the currency had been further inflated, and in the middle of November the money in circulation amounted to 13,000,000,000 Reichsmarks. No jeweller could sell any article containing gold unless paid for with an equal weight of gold, and all wedding-rings had to be made of steel. Whatever secret gold hoard the Nazi Government possessed, even when supplemented by what the Soviet Government may have paid as a bribe for non-intervention in the Baltic, it must have been but a small fraction of what Germany needed to pay for imports.

Germany's prospects were all the blacker when contrasted with the resources of the Allies, so that it is necessary to seek for more reasons against the immediate collapse that might otherwise have been predicted.

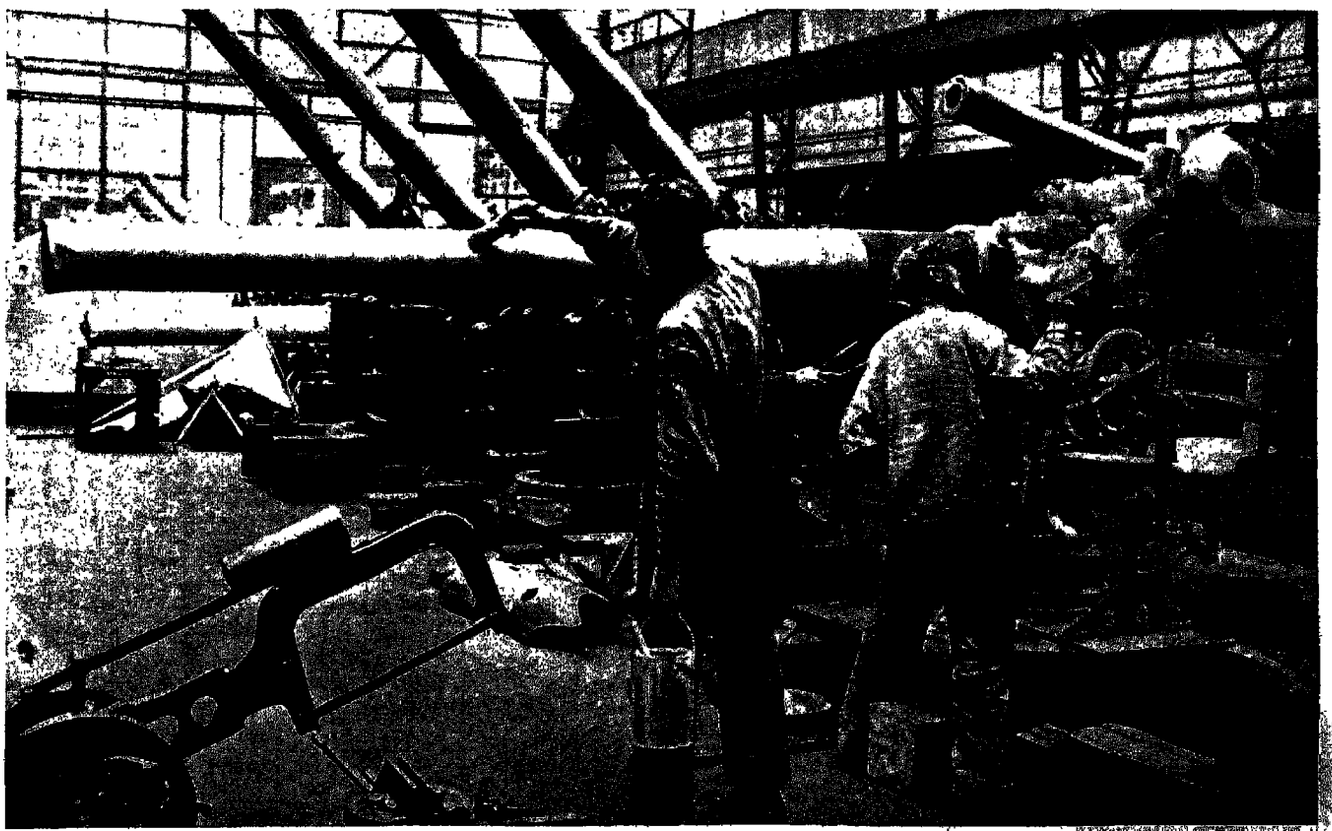
Strenuous efforts were needed to protect the regime from a break-down of morale, and some of the devices of propaganda are noted in a later Chapter. If conditions were bad they were not yet insupportable, provided that the majority of the people could be imbued with a sufficiently bellicose mentality and those of insurgent tendencies ruthlessly suppressed. Executions and imprisonments went on extensively; and it appeared probable that the bomb which exploded on November 10, 1939, in the Buergerbraukeller at Munich, just after Hitler and his leading henchmen had left, was due to a plot of the secret police. The affair resembled in all essentials the notorious Reichstag fire instigated by the Nazis, even to the subsequent arrests and the ensuing propaganda, which this time was at first directed against Great Britain, whose Secret Service was alleged to have prepared the outrage. Mixed up with this explanation was a renewed attack against the democrats and defeatists at home. The ordinary German citizen was not to know that the extension of the Allied contraband control to German exports—a reprisal against sowing the "magnetic mine" indiscriminately on the high seas—was a far more severe blow than the increased losses to Allied and neutral shipping resulting from mines.

An event like the sinking of the "Rawalpindi" by a pocket battleship could be represented as a great naval victory in a country where no public criticism of official news was possible. The safe return of the great German liner "Bremen" to Germany, in spite of the Allied naval blockade, was used to strengthen the fiction that the blockade was ineffective, although in fact a British submarine had sighted

**NAZI WARSHIPS MUST WAIT FOR THEIR 'GUNS**

**Several warships were under construction in the German naval yards when war broke out, and every effort was made to speed up their completion. But, apart from the hull, the full armament of a battleship takes a considerable time to construct, for the job is not one that can be scamped. Below is a corner of a German naval engineering workshop.**

*Photo, International Graphic Press*



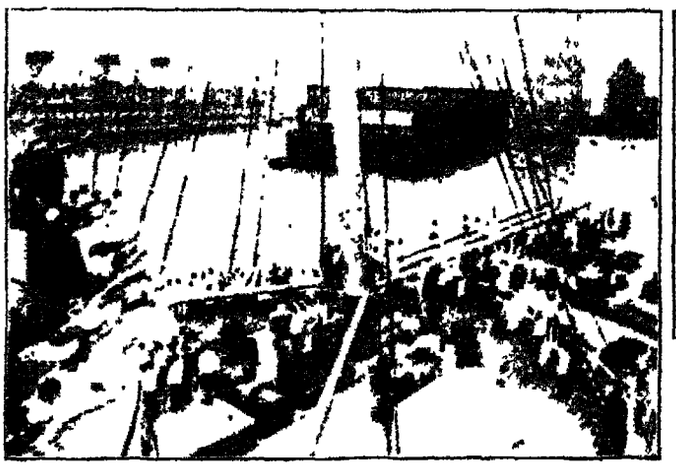
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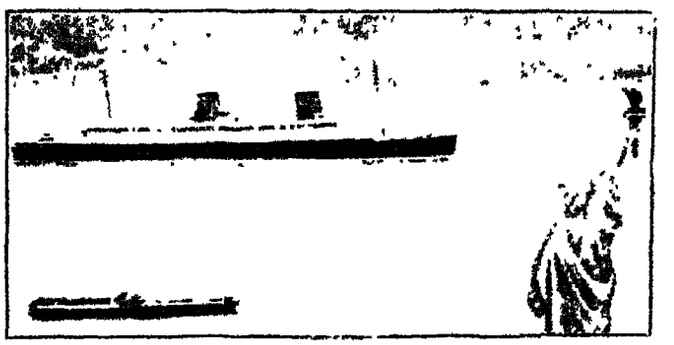


britischem kriegs
schiff in englischen
hafen eingebracht ++

*Aber die Wahrheit ist:*

# Die Bremen ist durch!





NAZIS BOOST 'BREMEN'S' SAFE RETURN

**The crack German liner "Bremen" left New York on August 30, 1939, and, thanks to a heavy fog which covered the North Atlantic, succeeded in passing north of Iceland and getting to the Russian port of Murmansk. On December 12 she managed to reach a German port, after having been sighted by the British submarine "Salmon," which, of course, was precluded by international law and common humanity from torpedoing her. The Nazis made much of the liner's safe return, and here we reproduce part of a page from the "Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung," with pictures of the vessel's departure from New York. At the top, on each side, is pasted what purports to be a telegraphic message reading: "England announces that on September 5 the 'Bremen' was brought into an English port by a British warship." Then the printed lines go on: "But the truth is—The Bremen is Through." This, of course, was a typical piece of Nazi propaganda.**

her and refrained from sinking an unarmed vessel. Outrages which increased the world's condemnation of Germany, such as the machine-gunning of trawlers' crews in December after their ships had been sunk by Nazi seaplanes, were transformed in German news into successful operations against armed ships.

The unquestionably widespread political antagonism to the Nazi regime again could be made less dangerous than it might have appeared outside Germany. Hitler's *volte-face* in cultivating Soviet friendship, even in the face of the invasion of Finland and the Soviet threat to the Scandinavian countries, must have caused much heart-searching among devout Nazis brought up in the hatred of political Communism; but on the whole it was accepted as a clever trick by which Germany had "double-crossed" the Allies in Stalin's favour. Some of the official Nazi speeches became quite discreet and almost tolerant of Communists, using the situation to reassert the Nazi regime's care for the ordinary little man. There was at the same time a strong Monarchist movement in Germany, at variance both with the Nazi Party and the Communist element; while the original and still considerable Democratic Republican movement, which asserted the claims of political freedom, was opposed to all three. We see how the cunning playing-off of these threatening tendencies against each other must have helped the regime in power to maintain its position so long as the economic situation did not make conditions intolerable. And if things became desperate, a government so unscrupulous still had other treasures to raid, after the people's last savings had been turned into loans for the State.

The next prospective scapegoat after the Jews had been sucked dry was the Roman Catholic Church, with property in Germany and the countries she had annexed that was estimated to equal some £4,000,000,000. During the war there was no possibility of this getting out of the Reich. And supposing there were 30,000,000 German Catholics? By the political divisions that the Government was apparently now encouraging, reinforced by the ruthless policing of the country and the usual propaganda justifying all contributions to save the Fatherland, this obstacle, too, could be overcome. But all the factors that could possibly be shown to explain why Germany might withstand the strain of war for a while longer left the conclusion inevitable that she must collapse when later the Allies attained their peak of effective war-power.

## *Historic Documents. LXX*

# *'CARRY ON AND DREAD NOUGHT!'*

With these vigorous words, Mr. Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, concluded his review of the naval war during the first three months, which he gave to the House of Commons on December 6, 1939. The First Lord's utterances, always cogent, were on this occasion enhanced by his confidence in the success of Britain's measures against the Nazi menace on the high seas.

THE main attack of the enemy has been concentrated upon the Royal Navy and the sea-borne commerce upon which the British Islands and the British Empire depend. We have always over 2,000 ships at sea, and between 100 and 150 ships move every day in and out of our harbours in the United Kingdom alone. This immense traffic has to be maintained in the teeth of a constant U-boat attack, which never hesitates to break the conventions of civilized warfare to which Germany so recently subscribed.

We have been frequently attacked from the air. Mining on a large scale has been practised against us, and latterly magnetic mines have been dropped from aeroplanes or laid by submarines in the approaches to our harbours, with the intention of destroying British and, still more, neutral commerce under conditions contrary to the accepted rules of sea warfare and to German engagements in regard to them.

Besides this, two of the so-called pocket battleships and certainly one other cruiser have been loose for many weeks past in the North and South Atlantic, or near Madagascar in the Indian Ocean.

The Admiralty's task has been to bring in our immense world-wide traffic in spite of this opposition. Besides this, we have to cleanse the seas of all German commerce and to arrest every German vessel and every scrap of cargo in which Germany is interested. Broadly speaking, these considerable duties have, up to the present, been successfully discharged.

The destruction of the U-boats is proceeding normally, and in accordance with the estimate I gave to the House of between two and four a week. That is to say, at a rate superior to what we believe to be the German power of replacing U-boats, and of replacing competently trained captains and crews. . . . .

The rate of destruction varies, of course, with the numbers of U-boats which are actively hunting. . . . . It is, however, my sure belief that we are getting the better of this menace to our life. We are buffeted by the waves, but the ocean tides flow steady and strong in our favour. . . . .

The convoy system is now in full operation. Very few ships have been attacked in convoy; less than one in 750 has been sunk. Nevertheless, we must remember that convoy involves a certain definite loss of carrying power, since the ships must wait during the assembly of the convoy and the convoy must travel at the speed of the slowest ship. This loss is being steadily reduced by the institution of slow and fast convoys and by other appropriate measures.

### Neutrals Suffer Most From U-Boats

IN consequence of these processes the U-boats have found it easier to attack neutral shipping than the vessels of Britain and France. They prefer increasingly to attack the ships of countries with whom they are at peace rather than those of the countries with whom they are at war. The figures are really remarkable.

The losses of British merchant ships in October were half what they were in September, and in November they were only two-thirds of what they were in October. There has been a strong and steady diminution of loss among all ships obeying Admiralty directions or joining our convoys.

Quite contrary has been the case with the neutrals. They lost half as much again in the second month as they did in the first, and double as much in the third month as they did in the second. . . . .

In the last few weeks the German U-boats have largely abandoned the gun for the torpedo, have descended from the torpedo to the mine. This is about the lowest form of warfare that can be imagined. . . . . The magnetic mine, deposited secretly by the U-boat under the cloak of darkness in the approaches to our harbours, or dropped from parachuting aircraft, may perhaps be Hitler's much-vaunted secret weapon. It is certainly a characteristic weapon, and one that will be for ever associated with his name.

The magnetic mine is neither new nor mysterious. As the Prime Minister announced in his broadcast, its secrets are known to us. Indeed, the preparation of counter-measures was already far advanced before the first magnetic mine was laid in British waters. I do not wish, however, in any way to underrate the magnitude or intensity of the effort which will be required and is now forthcoming to cope with this latest manifestation of Nazi culture. Events must tell their tale, and we are content to be judged by the results of our exertions.

The recklessness of this latest attack upon neutrals, and the breach of international agreements which it involves, have led us to place a retaliatory embargo upon the export of all goods of German ownership or origin. . . . .

### Fishermen Eager to Serve Their Country

AS an interim measure before the full scientific treatment can be given to this problem, we have found it necessary to call upon a large number of trawlers to assist in the dredging of our harbours. The service of mine-sweeping is one of peculiar danger, calculated to try the strongest nerves because of the slowness and constant uncertainty of destruction in which those who engage in it must dwell. All these serious dangers were sufficient to bring forward an overwhelming response from fishermen and crews who were called upon to come to their country's assistance, probably only for a comparatively short time. . . . .

We began the war with 21,000,000 tons of merchant shipping. . . . . Out of this total we have lost, during the three months in which we have been subject to severe and concentrated attack by all kinds of methods, fair and foul, by U-boat, by mine, by surface raider, and by the hazards of the sea, about 340,000 tons.

Against this we have gained by transfer from foreign flags, by prizes taken from the enemy, and by the new vessels we are building on a large scale, about 280,000 tons, leaving a net loss of about 60,000 tons. . . . . For every 1,000 tons of British shipping sunk, 110,000 tons have entered the ports of this threatened island, which we are told on the enemy's authority is beleaguered and beset on all sides, in the first three months of war. . . . . If the House feel that these facts are reassuring and worthy of acknowledgement, their debt is due to the officers and men of the Royal Navy, and of the Merchant Service and also in increasing measure to their comrades of the Royal Air Force, as well as to our Allies, the French. . . . .

The price for sea control must be paid. It is often heavy. . . . We have lost in these three months of war two great ships, the "Courageous" and the "Royal Oak," two destroyers, and the submarine which was blown up by accident—in all about 50,000 tons.

We have at present building, much of it in an advanced stage, nearly 1,000,000 tons of warships of all classes.

We have also lost one of our 50 armed merchant cruisers, the "Rawalpindi," whose glorious fight against overwhelming odds deserves the respect and honour of the House and of the nation. . . . .

IF I have given facts and figures of reassurance tonight it is only because the House and the nation have a right to know them, and because the House and the public can alike be trusted to use these good tidings only as a stimulus and fortification to the much greater efforts which will be required from us as this fierce and obstinate conflict rises to its full height.

We have the means and we have the opportunity of marshalling the whole vast strength of the British Empire, and of the Mother Country, and directing them steadfastly and unswervingly to the fulfilment of our purposes and the vindication of our cause, and for each and all, as for the Royal Navy, the watchword should be 'Carry On and Dread Nought."

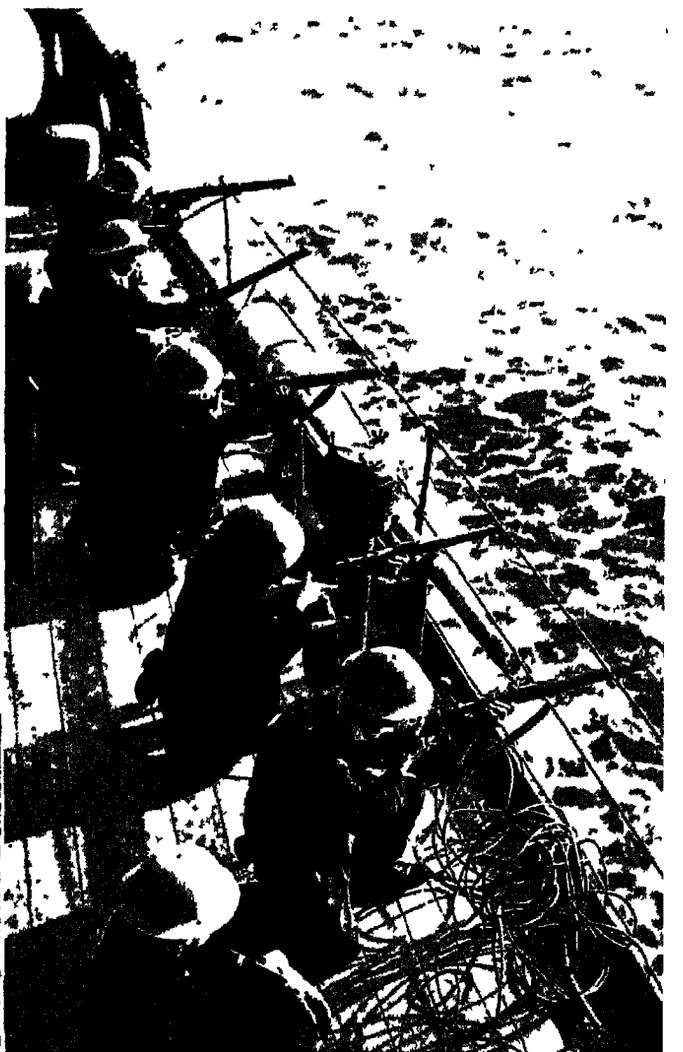


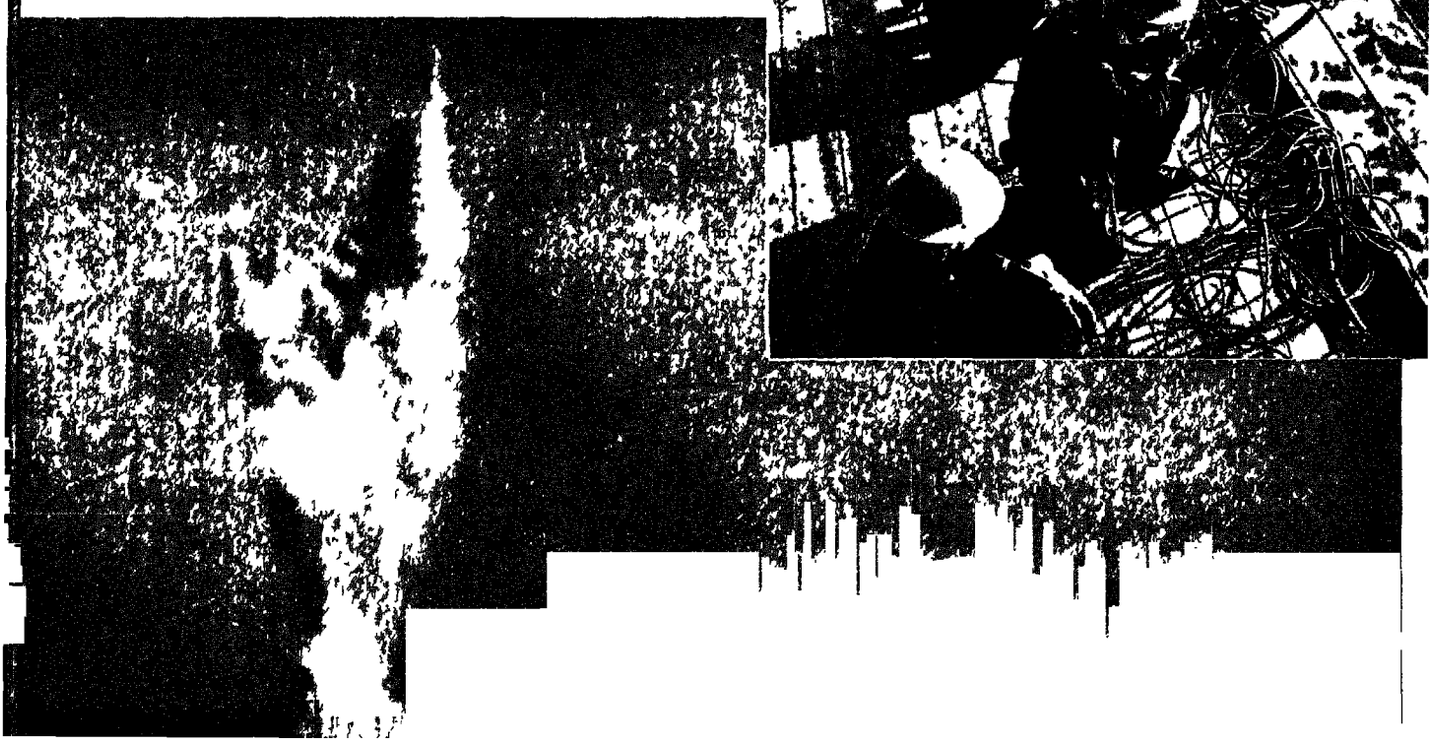
## SEAMEN WHO COPE WITH THE MINE MENACE

Among the war honours awarded during 1939, none were more deserved than those given to these officers and men for their work in recovering German mines from the sea. *Left to right* are A B A L Vearncombe (D.S M ); C.P.O C E Baldwin (D.S.M.), Lt.-Com. J. E. M. Glenny (D S C ); Lieut. R. C Lewis (D.S O.), and Lt.-Com. J Ouvry (D S.O.) Our other photographs show: *below*, Newfoundlanders who travelled to England to join the minesweepers, writing home about it; *right*, crew of a minesweeper firing at a mine; *bottom*, a German mine destroyed by the trawler which located it.

*Photos, Keystone; G.P.U.; L.N.A.; A. Webster*







Chapter 36

# THE SEA AFFAIR: INTENSIFIED ENEMY ACTION BY MINE, RAIDER AND SUBMARINE

*Germany Employs Aircraft to Sow Magnetic Mines—Heavy Neutral Losses—Britain's Embargo on Sea-borne German Exports—Other Countermeasures—'Simon Bolivar' and 'Terukuni Maru,' Victims of the Magnetic Mine—Epic Story of the 'Rawalpindi,' Sunk by the 'Deutschland'—A Commerce Raider in the South Atlantic*

DURING the closing days of October and the early days of November 1939, there was a lull in the war at sea. It was later noted by the First Lord of the Admiralty that the fluctuations of submarine activity had been clearly marked during the first three months of war: there had been periods of maximum activity interspersed with periods of minimum activity, the inference being that these latter occurred when the bulk of the raiders returned home for rest and refreshment. In the period under review the peak of destruction was reached towards the third week of November, when the quantity of British and, more particularly, neutral shipping sunk became so alarming for a few days as to distort the public view and cause an excusable but unnecessary apprehension.

This apprehension was increased by the news that the Germans, contrary to the solemn declarations which they had signed, were employing a form of magnetic mine which they were sowing indiscriminately along the open trade routes of the North Sea, dropped with or without parachutes from aeroplanes, or were sowing in the same waters by submarines. It is therefore desirable before describing the details of these disasters to take a broad view of this period between the end of October and the beginning of December, to contrast the results with those of the preceding eight weeks, and to mark the many encouraging features which were apparent in the situation. At all times there had been over 2,000 British ships at sea, and between 100 and 150 ships had moved daily in and out of the harbours of the United Kingdom alone. This great traffic had been maintained in spite of unremitting attacks by U-boat, by aeroplanes and by mines. As well, there had been the lurking danger of the two pocket battleships and at least one other German cruiser loose in the North or South Atlantic, or near Madagascar in the Indian Ocean.

The destruction of U-boats had, however, maintained an average of from two to four a week, a rate which Mr. Churchill suggested was rather more than the Germans could replace with equanimity either in the matter of ships or of trained officers and crews. In the event, however, of the enemy making large additions to their submarine forces, they would be faced with a vastly superior number of British hunting craft, already trebled since the beginning of the war. "It is," said the First Lord, "my sure belief that we are getting the better of this menace to our life. We are buffeted by the waves, but the ocean tides flow strongly in our favour."

One of the many measures taken to counter the submarine menace was the arming of merchant ships to resist attack (*see* Chapter 26). At the end of three months more than a thousand had been so armed, and it was anticipated that shortly the number would be 2,000. The convoy system, too, had reached a high state of efficiency, and of those ships which had sailed under its protection less than one in 750 had been sunk. The losses of British merchant ships in October were half what they were in September, and those in November were only two-thirds of the losses in October.

The price paid for sea control necessarily fell on the Navy itself—never, Mr. Churchill said, so constantly at sea as during this war. Figures of damage, so often claimed by the Germans to represent complete loss, were not published, but at the end of three months ships of a total of about 50,000 tons had been irretrievably sunk. This figure included the "Courageous" and the "Royal Oak," two destroyers, and a submarine accidentally blown up. In the corresponding period of 1914, when the German sea-campaign was by no means so intensive, naval losses had been double this figure, and the comforting assurance was given that nearly 1,000,000 tons of warships of all classes were building, a large proportion of them being in an advanced stage.

The indiscriminate laying of the magnetic mine was a new form of "frightfulness" by which naval historians of the future will remember these eventful months.

**The Murder Mine**

The magnetic mine explodes on the near approach of a ship, and not on contact. It is to this extent more dangerous than other mines. It does, of course, enlarge the danger area, but the real menace of this "lowest form of warfare that can be imagined"—comparable, said Mr. Churchill, to "the warfare of the I.R.A. leaving the bomb in the parcels office of railway stations"—was in its indiscriminate dispersal along unsuspected routes.

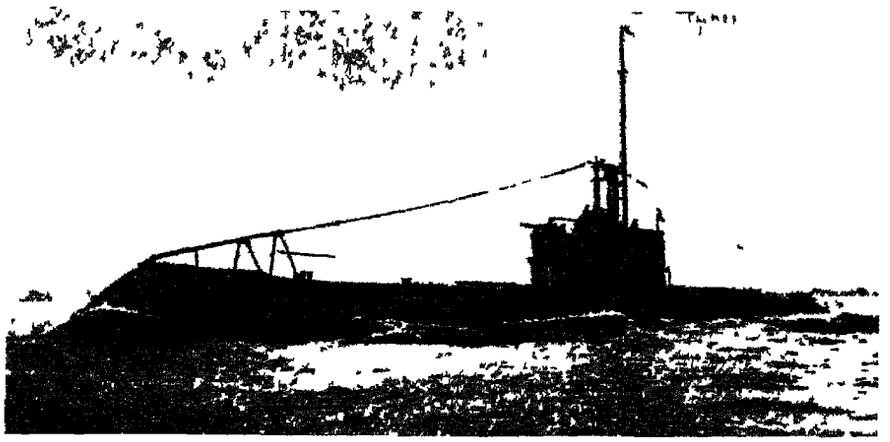
International agreements make it clear that minefields laid outside




**HOW NAZI AIRMEN LAID MAGNETIC MINES**

(A) One of the crew of this Dornier Do. 18 flying boat is releasing mines through an aperture. (B) Parachutes prevent too violent impact. (C) Mines linked in pairs. (D) Decoy 'planes flying at height.

*Drawing by Haworth*






**PRICE OF SEA MASTERY**

Here are two of the ships lost by the Navy—part of the price which has to be paid in wartime for control of the seas. Above is H.M.S "Oxley," a submarine of the "Oberon" class, accidentally destroyed by explosion in Oct. 1939. Right, H.M.S. "Blanche," a destroyer of the "B" class, which was sunk by a mine on Nov. 14, 1939.

*Photos, Wright & Logan*

territorial waters must be notified to the world. The German propaganda department made the fantastic suggestion that these mines were laid by the British, laid apparently with the intention of blockading their own harbours and sinking cargoes of vital use to them. This incredibly stupid lie, which could not have deceived an imbecile, was quickly dropped and was followed by some boastful claims of domination of the sea by these illicit means. It is worth noting in this connexion that all British minefields were notified as they were laid, and the mines were so constructed that any drifted from moorings were rendered harmless, in accordance with The Hague Convention.

It was, however, quickly established that the chief sufferers from this new form of piracy were to be the neutrals peacefully plying their trade along sea routes they had every reason to believe to be safe. During the third month of the war the neutral countries lost two-thirds as much shipping through destruction by mine as did the British. Their losses of all kinds were one-third greater than belligerent losses, and among the countries involved were Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Finland, Yugoslavia, Holland, Greece, Italy, and Japan. Such neutral countries lost half as much again in the second month as in the first, and twice as much in the third month as they did in the second.

Amongst the measures adopted immediately to counter the new menace were the rapid reinforcement of the minesweeping flotillas, and a definite plan of reprisal by which all German exports discovered in sea-going cargoes should be confiscated and held in bond until the end of the war. The first provides a thrilling story of patriotism and fearlessness on the part of men of the fishing fleets. The Admiralty appealed for more men to man additional vessels to take up minesweeping duties. Two hundred drifters were asked for and 2,000 volunteers to man them. Both were immediately forthcoming; it was said that at the East Coast ports, particularly, men were scrambling over each other in their eagerness to be accepted for the dangerous task, and recruiting offices had to be kept open all night to deal with the unceasing flow of applicants.

The embargo announced on November 28 on German exports gave rise to the familiar "fury" of the Nazi leaders. It also raised much complaint in certain neutral quarters, but, as Mr. Churchill pointed out, it was not a new move; it had been used with success in the war of 1914–18 without any material hardship to neutrals. To this he added that German quays were already congested with goods for export, upon which their credits depended but for which they could secure no transport.

As has been said, news of the "sea affair" was not very plentiful during the latter part of October and the first weeks of November. On October 25 the




**MINEFIELDS IN THE NORTH SEA**

The sketch map above shows the mine barrage off the East Coast of Great Britain, the laying of which was announced by the Admiralty on December 27, 1939, as a reply to the German action of laying mines without notice on the high seas. A and B mark the points beyond which, southwards, vessels may not pass. Dangerous area is shaded diagonally. The map also shows the main German "home" minefield and the area off Heligoland Bight which was patrolled systematically by the R.A.F.

sinking of five British ships was reported; and on the evening of October 26 Deal boatmen found the broken wreck of a German submarine on the Goodwin Sands, while on the same day another German submarine was sunk by naval units in the Atlantic. On November 3 came the news that a 4,327 ton German tanker, "Emmy Friedrich," with Mexican oil believed to have been intended for the pocket battleship "Deutschland," had been scuttled by the orders of her captain to avoid capture.

On October 30 and November 7 further attempts were made by German aeroplanes to damage naval ships. The Admiralty announced that certain light forces, including two Polish destroyers, were in action with German aircraft. No damage was done to any ship. Three Polish destroyers were in fact serving with the British fleet at this time.

**Polish Ships Aid R.N.**

On November 14 the British destroyer "Blanche" sank after striking a mine. This destroyer, of 1,360 tons displacement, with four 4.7-in. guns and eight torpedo tubes, was completed in 1931. After a vain struggle to save their ship most of the crew were picked up by passing craft; many of them were badly injured, having kept afloat in a sea of oil for an hour or more.

On November 19 the whole world was shocked by the news that the Dutch





**POLISH SHIPS WITH THE BRITISH NAVY**

On November 30, 1939, the Newcastle collier "Sheaf Crest" was mined off the East Coast. Fifteen of her crew were rescued by a Polish destroyer, and, above, survivors are being helped ashore by Polish sailors. Left, the Polish destroyers "Grom" and "Blyskawica" (Thunder and Lightning), which, leaving Poland, joined the British fleet. They were built at Cowes in 1936.

*Photos, Fox; Topical Press*

liner "Simon Bolivar" (8,309 tons) had been sunk on the previous day by a German mine off the East Coast of England. She had left Amsterdam only the day before for the West Indies. She had a complement of 225 passengers, mostly Dutch nationals, but including many British and a sprinkling of refugees from Czecho-slovakia and Germany.

About the time the first luncheon was ready to be served and the passengers were still playing deck games, a terrific

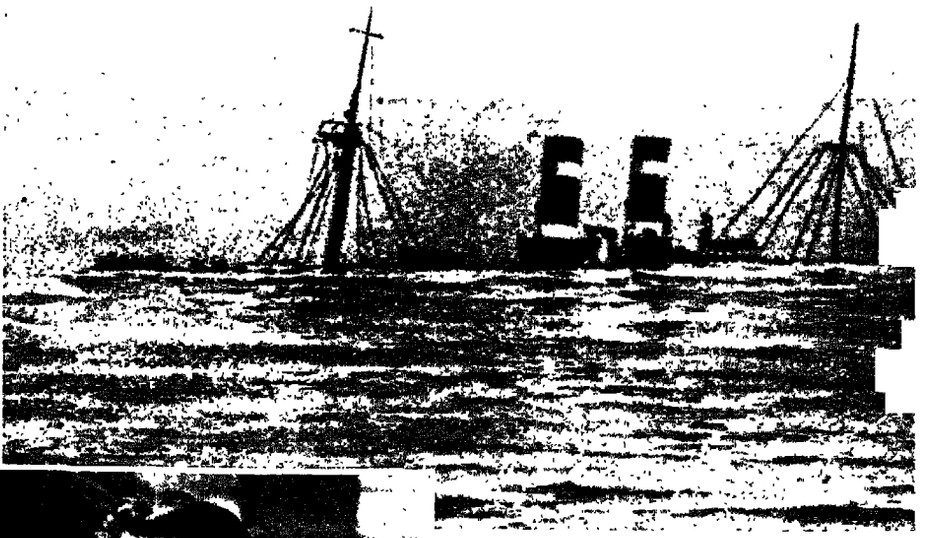


## DOOMED U-BOAT'S CREW RESCUED BY THEIR FOES

**This dramatic series of photographs shows that British sailors still wage war in their traditional chivalrous manner. Their duty was to sink the German submarine whose conning tower can be seen above, but, that task performed, rescue boats picked up survivors, as shown below. In the circle, one of the U-boat's crew is being helped aboard the British destroyer.**

*Photos, Keystone; G.P.U.; Associated Press*

explosion occurred. It seemed to be immediately underneath the bridge, and the captain (Hendrick Voorspuiy) was killed instantly, as were others of the crew and some passengers. It was at once obvious that the ship would sink, and frantic efforts were made to lower the boats ; but owing to the sharp list when she heeled to port, only those on the starboard side could be filled and lowered. Further disaster followed, for a second explosion occurred which upset some of the boats and threw their occupants into the sea. Worse horror was encountered in the ship itself, when the oil pipes burst and those who had not gained the decks were trapped and smothered. Many of the survivors jumped or swarmed down ropes into the sea, by this time covered with thick, greasy oil.





NEUTRALS SUFFER FROM NAZI MINE WAR

**The Dutch liner " Simon Bolivar " was sunk by a German mine in the North Sea on November 18, 1939, with the loss of 83 lives. Top right, the liner is seen disappearing beneath the waves ; above is Mr. Gerard Wensing, one of the survivors, holding his eighteen-months-old baby. *His wife was drowned in the disaster.***

*Photos, " Daily Mirror "*

Two ships which happened to be near by at the time had suffered damage from German mines and could not render effective help, but within twenty minutes rescuing vessels appeared. They went to the assistance of the lifeboats in which seriously wounded passengers were lying, and picked up from the sea the many who were clinging to rafts and spars. At the dock where they were landed the railway station was turned into a casualty clearing station ; but even now the troubles of these wretched people were not over, for shortly afterwards an air-raid warning was given and they had to be herded into a shelter before the " All Clear " was sounded. They were afterwards taken to London hotels and hospitals, where it took hours to free them from the coating of oil which still covered their bodies and matted their hair.

They told piteous stories. One survivor, Mr. S. G. Preece, a widower travelling with his small daughter and chauffeur, had the inspiration to put the child into a wooden box, which, by clinging to a raft himself, he was able to propel safely until rescued, although he was in danger of sinking from his oil-saturated clothes. His chauffeur, who had gallantly helped him to launch this frail craft, he never saw again. Other survivors spoke of the anguish which they suffered as they watched mothers clinging to babies drown before their eyes. Some paid tribute to a quiet, middle-aged nurse who worked calmly through this terrible time and saved the lives of several children, but refused to give her name. For sheer courage and determination, however, few of these stories excel that of Dr. William Besson, a thirty-four-year-old colonial officer, which he told in hospital to a special correspondent of "The Daily Telegraph."

Dr. Besson was sailing back to his post after six months' leave. His wife, four-year-old daughter and six-year-old son were all drowned. He said :

" I was thrown high into the air by the explosion as the ship struck the first mine. I smashed my spine and my arm as I landed on the deck. The ship's boat we clambered into capsized and I was thrown into the water.

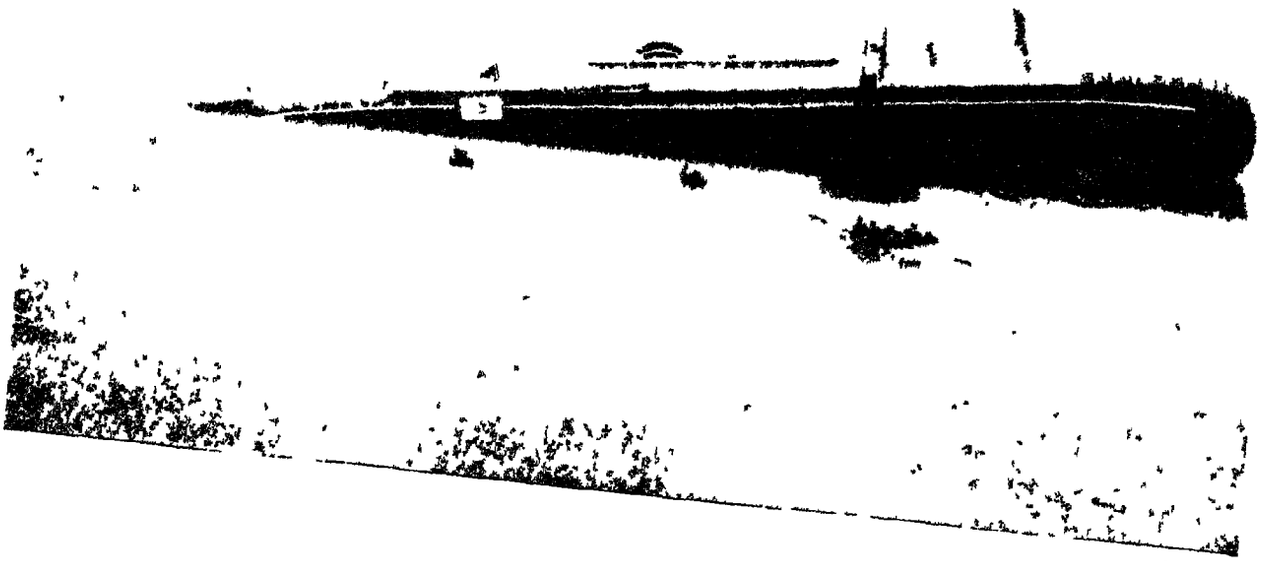
" Clinging to wreckage, I drifted for four hours. Then I saw a rope trailing from the side of a British destroyer. I caught hold of it with my teeth and clung to it.

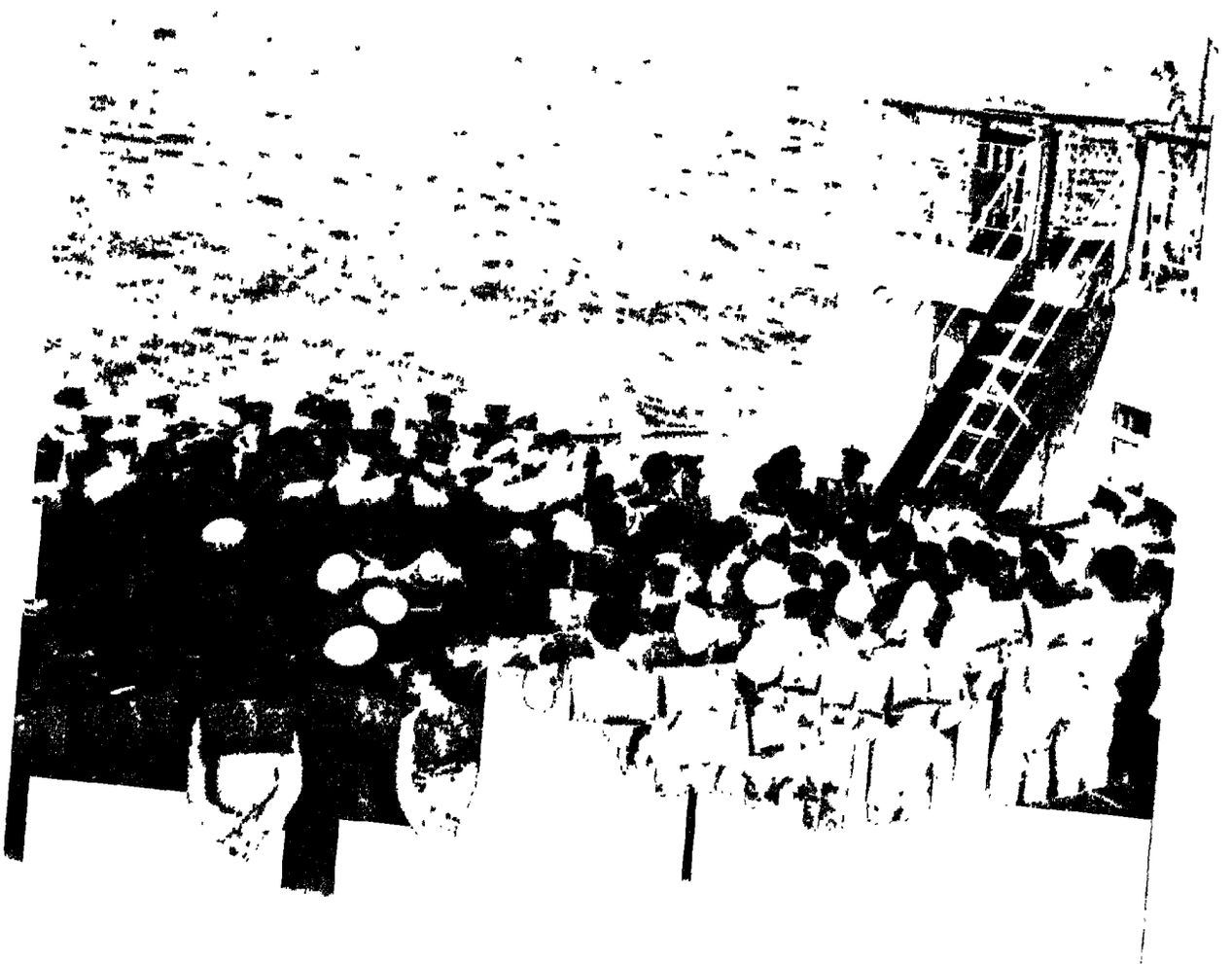
" Then, using my teeth and my good arm, I gradually hauled myself up. I was too weak to shout for help."

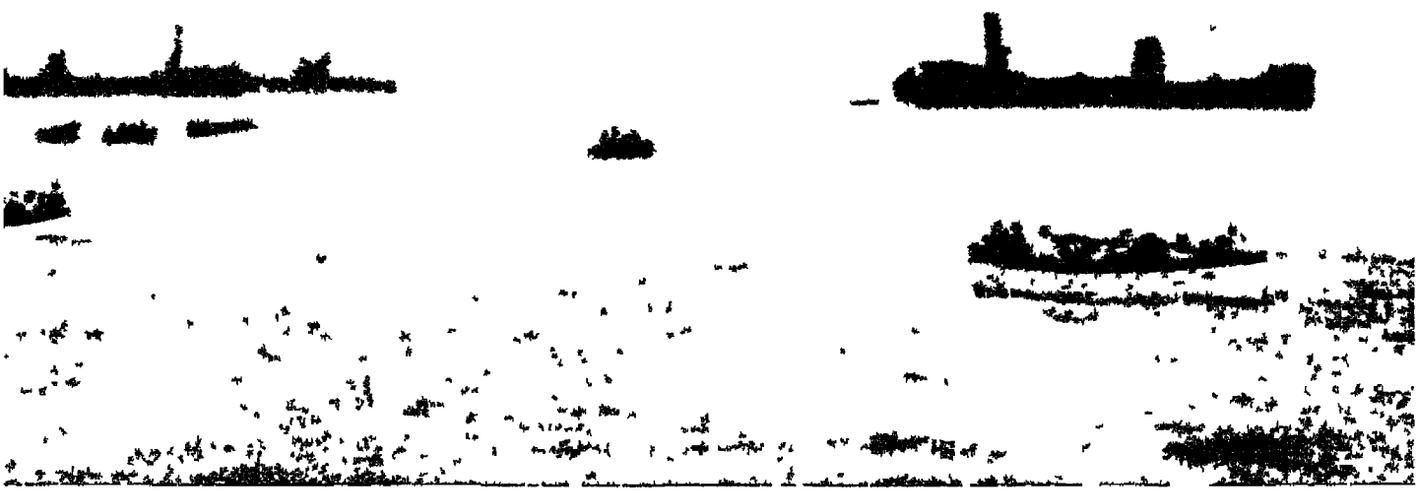
Dr. Besson's brother-in-law, Mr. John Davis, told how after receiving his terrible injuries Dr. Besson directed rescue operations as he lay in agony on the deck, how he helped his wife and daughter to some drifting wreckage when the ship's boat turned over, how he left their side to plunge to the rescue of his son, who had been swept away by a wave, and how, with injuries that would have rendered any man completely helpless in normal circumstances, he swam after the little boy until he could swim no longer.

In all eighty-three passengers and members of the crew lost their lives in this, one of the most poignant tragedies of the sea, and many could never completely recover from their injuries.

Altogether between November 18 and 26 at least twenty-one British and neutral ships were the victims of the new German minefields. With few exceptions these ships had their toll of dead and missing. Five were killed in







**JAPANESE LINER SUNK BY GERMAN MINE**

The 11 930-ton Japanese liner Terukuni Maru was sunk by a German magnetic mine off the East coast of England Happily the crew and passengers were saved Above the ship is shown heeling over and sinking as the lifeboats pull for safety Below left members of the crew wearing their life-saving gear are awaiting instructions for leaving the ship Below right is Captain Oguno the commander the last man to leave the ship

*Photos "The Daily Mirror" Associated Press*

the explosion which sank the Italian Grazia" (5,857 tons) within a few minutes near the coast on November 18 Rescue ships brought back twenty-six survivors From the Swedish ship B O Borjessen" (1,586 tons) seven were missing out of a crew of twenty The Torchbearer" (1,267 tons) was a collier owned by the Gas Light and Coke Company, and four were missing of her crew of seventeen Four survivors were removed to Colchester Hospital with serious injuries

Thirty-one children were rendered fatherless by the sinking of the trawler Wigmore" (345 tons), of which there were no known survivors The crew of the Yugoslav "Carica Milica" (6,571 tons) which was carrying a cargo of coal from London to Dubrovnik was saved Of some other ships mined, the British 'Geraldus" (1,494 tons) and the Greek Elena R" (4,576 tons) reported their crews safe The London steamer 'Lowland" (474 tons), sunk in the North Sea, had nine missing and her master died of injuries

During this critical week German submarines were also active On November 18 the British steamer "Pensilva" (2,250 tons) was torpedoed amidships and sank within an hour She had managed to send out an S O S and all her crew were saved Not so fortunate were the crew of the Arlington Court" sunk off the Irish coast Twenty two survivors were rescued, but eleven persons were missing, seven of these latter were afterwards picked up, and the chief engineer died in the ship's lifeboat The seven rescued from this particular lifeboat had been adrift for six days, and had suffered the most severe hardships from exposure and lack of food and water

On November 23 eleven survivors of the Italian ship Darino' were landed in an East Coast port after having been kept for three days aboard the German submarine which sank her It was on November 21 that the Italian ship "Fianona' was damaged by mine off the South East coast Though badly smashed and leaking, she was taken in tow by tugs and reached port

More sensational perhaps, was the sinking on November 21 of the crack Japanese liner, 'Terukuni Maru," of 11,930 tons one of the best ships of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha Fortunately the explosion occurred in the daytime, and no lives were lost Had it been at night

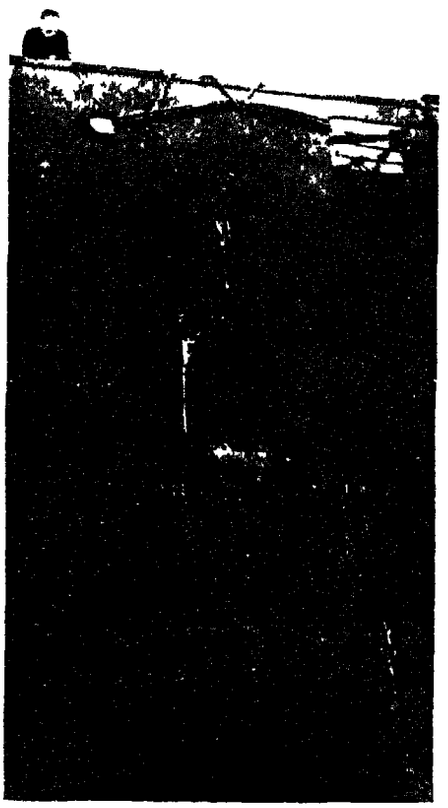




Associated Press Ltd.

**VICTIMS OF MAGNETIC MINES**

**Neutral countries lost almost as much shipping as did Britain through the indiscriminate laying by the Germans of magnetic mines. On November 21, 1939, the Italian steamer "Fianona" struck a mine, but fortunately did not sink. The next day H.M. Minesweeper "Aragonite" was sunk by a mine near the same spot, and the photograph above shows the two victims side by side, the moored "Fianona" on the left. Below, right, the split in the hull of the "Fianona."**



the disaster might have developed into real tragedy. There could be no question that it was a German mine, almost certainly of the magnetic type, which caused the loss of this fine vessel Despite a specially vigilant look-out for mines, at 12.53 the "Terukuni Maru" struck one. The explosion took place between Nos. 2 and 3 holds, and the engine-room became flooded. Some of the first-class passengers who were lunching were slightly injured by plates striking their faces, and one or two of the crew also received minor injuries—but all passengers and crew were away in the lifeboats and a few rescuing boats from the shore forty-two minutes after the mine had exploded. No one was lost out of a total of 206.

**Loss of Japanese Liner**

On the same day the British Navy had the misfortune to lose by mine off the East Coast the destroyer "Gipsy," launched in 1935. There was considerable loss of life (including the commander, Lt.-Commander N. J. Crossley). Twenty-one officers and men were injured and about forty ratings missing.

Over 100 survivors were landed at an East Coast port by various rescuing ships on the following night. One vessel picked up thirty men who were swimming strongly following a leader who encouraged them with shouts of, "Come on, boys, here we are." When they reached port in the most nondescript collection of clothing, these stout fellows were still singing lustily. One man wearing a black and white football shirt shouted to the crowds as he stepped ashore, "All right, chaps, I'm playing for Newcastle United" The "Gipsy" had that day rescued three German airmen found adrift in the North Sea.

On November 22 the Royal Navy lost the minesweeper "Aragonite." Tugs rescued the crew of seventeen, four of whom were seriously injured, and efforts to tow the ship were unavailing. On November 25 came the serious news that the British cruiser "Belfast" had been damaged four days earlier by torpedo or mine in the Firth of Forth. The ship, only completed a month before the war, was able to be taken in hand for repair, but unfortunately twenty of the crew were wounded. The German wireless falsely claimed that she had been torpedoed and sunk.

On the same day it was announced that five survivors of the crew of the Dutch tanker "Sliedricht" (5,133 tons) had been rescued exhausted and frozen after drifting for seven days in an open lifeboat The ship had been torpedoed by a German submarine in the Atlantic after the commander had been informed that she was a neutral vessel bound for a neutral port. Another British ship, the 8,886-ton Brocklebank steamer "Mangalore," struck at anchor by a drifting mine, was seen to sink by crowds watching on the shore of an East Coast town. Her crew was saved with some injured.

About this time good news came from France, the French destroyer "Siroco" having destroyed two German submarines within two days. Yet another U-boat was the victim of an armed French survey vessel. Allied captures

also included three German cargo ships, while the German liner "Adolph Woermann" (8,577 tons), which had escaped from Lobito Bay, Portuguese West Africa, was sunk by her crew in the South Atlantic to evade surrender. Thirty-five passengers and a crew of 127 were picked up by British ships. No lives were lost.

Occasional raids were made on naval ships by enemy aircraft, but never with any outstanding success. During two such attacks in the North Sea, on November 25, many bombs were dropped, but no hits were obtained, and there were no casualties despite claims made by German wireless.

On November 28 full details came to hand, in an Admiralty statement, of the sinking of the former P. & O. liner "Rawalpindi," which had been converted into an armed merchant cruiser, revealing a stirring story of heroic resistance against overwhelming odds, worthy of the highest traditions of the British Navy.

The "Rawalpindi," which was manned by merchant seamen, reservists and pensioners of the Royal Navy, R.N.R. and R.N.V.R., was forming a part of the Northern Patrol engaged in contraband control. On the afternoon of November 23, when cruising to the S.E. of Iceland, she sighted an enemy ship. The commanding officer, Captain Kennedy, at once identified this vessel as the German "pocket" battleship "Deutschland." The crew were ordered to action stations, course was altered to bring the enemy on the starboard quarter, and an attempt was made to escape under cover of a smoke screen. But a second enemy ship was soon seen to starboard.

The "Deutschland," approaching, signalled the "Rawalpindi" to stop, and when she failed to do so fired a shot across her bows. This warning being rejected, the battleship started to fire salvoes from her 11-inch guns. The "Rawalpindi" replied with all her four starboard guns, but the third salvo from the "Deutschland" put out all the lights and broke the electric winches of the ammunition supply, while the fourth shot away the whole of the bridge and wireless room. The second German ship was now firing, from the port side, but the "Rawalpindi" fought on until every gun was put out of action and the whole ship was ablaze except the forecastle and the poop.

After from 30 to 40 minutes the German ships ceased firing and the only three boats of the "Rawalpindi" which had not been shelled to pieces were lowered. This was about 4.25 p.m., and at 6.15 p.m. a British cruiser approached and the enemy immediately withdrew. It was stated by the Germans that they had picked up 26 survivors; those who were rescued by the British armed cruiser "Chitral" numbered only eleven. The burning wreck turned turtle and foundered with Captain Kennedy and all her remaining hands at 8.0 p.m. She went down with her colours flying, after a most gallant and memorable fight. All attempts to shadow and pursue the attackers failed in the rain and darkness.

**End of the 'Rawalpindi'**

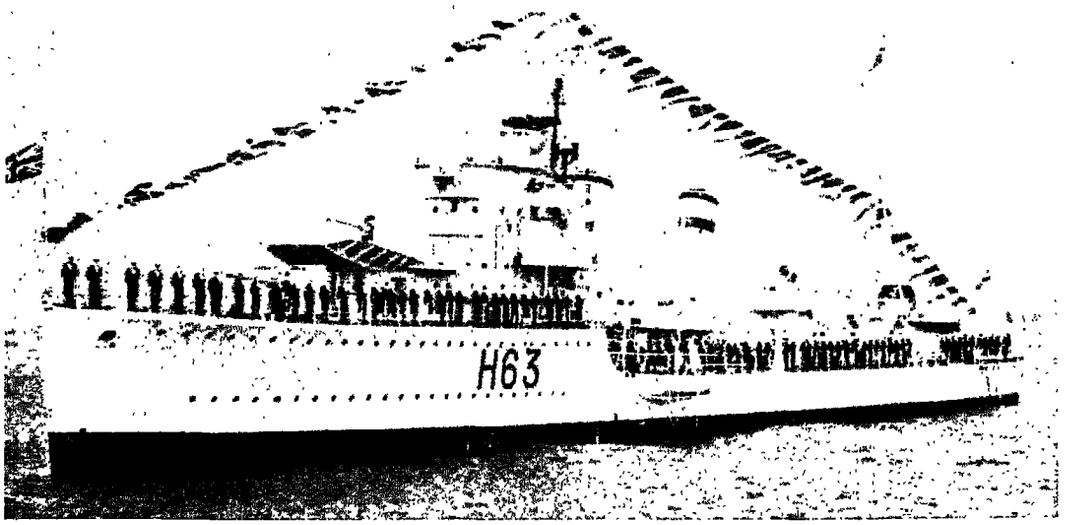
The menace of the "pocket" battleships thus remained unchecked for the time being. The "Deutschland," "Admiral Scheer" and "Admiral Graf Spee" have been described as masterpieces of naval architecture. They are fitted with six 11-inch guns, with the usual secondary armament, and two aircraft. They have a speed of 26 knots and a wide range of action, though dependent in wartime on supply ships (several of which are known to have been captured). The "Deutschland," for example, had a range of 10,000 miles without refuelling. When it is remembered that only five ships of the Allied fleets (the "Hood," "Renown," "Repulse," "Dunkerque" and the "Strasbourg") are their match in

## NAZIS COULD NOT UNDERMINE THEIR COURAGE

**Below, survivors of the British steamer "Eskdene," sunk by a mine in the North Sea, are seen at a Scottish Sailors' Home, where they arrived after spending nearly twelve hours in an open boat. They are typical of the British seamen who carried on their daily work in the teeth of ever-present dangers. In the centre Captain E. J. Niblett is making out his report.**

*Photo, Planet News*

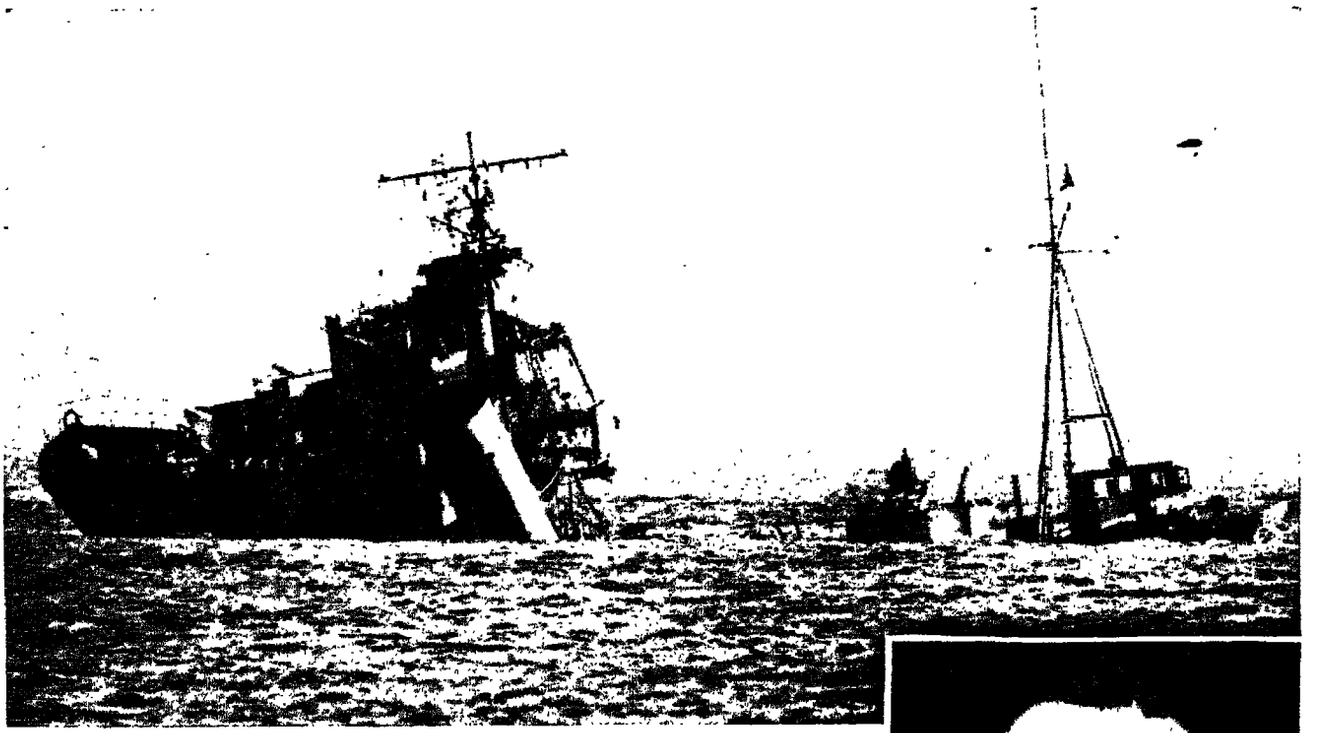





## SAD END OF A BRITISH DESTROYER

H.M. Destroyer "Gipsy" struck a mine off the East Coast on Nov. 21, 1939, and was later beached. On the left the ship is seen "dressed over all" on the occasion of a naval review. Below, in sad contrast, she lies with a broken back two miles off shore. Her commander, Lieut.-Commander N. J. Crossley (bottom right), died of injuries received, and in the photograph at the foot of the page his funeral cortège is seen arriving at a country church.

*Photos, G.P.U.; Associated Press; Wide World*









THE END OF A GERMAN SUPPLY SHIP

On her journey to Australia a British motor vessel sighted the German supply ship "Adolph Woermann." She gave chase and radioed a British cruiser, which soon came on the scene. The photograph above, taken from the motor vessel, shows the "Adolph Woermann" (left) with the British cruiser standing guard. Soon afterwards, having transferred the passengers and crew, the cruiser sank the supply ship with a few well-aimed shells.

*Photo, Central Press*

battle, the heroic fight of the "Rawalpindi" can be appreciated to the full. As the Prime Minister said:

"Those men must have known as soon as they sighted their enemy that there was no chance for them, but they had no thought of surrender. They fought their guns until they could be fought no more, and many of them went to their deaths, thereby carrying on the great traditions of the Royal Navy."

Many were the stirring stories told by the few survivors who landed on British soil. After the first salvoes, gunners lay about the blazing deck, some mortally wounded, with dead around them, trying in vain to feed their guns with shells. One man, terribly injured, and moving on his knees, and another wounded in the head and arms, groped their way towards their gun both carrying shells and shouting, "We'll get them!" With their ship aflame and the odds hopelessly against them they fought on to the end.

Meanwhile the sinkings of British and neutral merchantmen went on with painful regularity. On November 27 it became known that the London steamer "Hookwood" (1,537 tons) had been sunk (on November 23) by a German mine. Two of the crew were missing. On November 27 the chief victim was the Dutch liner "Spaarndam" (8,857 tons). Four members of the crew and a woman passenger were drowned. Three of the crew of the Newport steamer "Uskmouth," which was sunk, were reported missing. The survivors of the Newcastle collier "Sheaf Crest" (2,730 tons), mined off the East Coast, were rescued on November 30 by a Polish destroyer. On December 1 the toll included the Newcastle steamer "Dalryan" (4,558 tons), the crew and pilot being rescued; and the Finnish steamer "Mercator" (4,260 tons), some of whose crew were towed to safety on a raft by a fishing vessel.

In the first week of December 1939 nearly 60,000 tons of British and neutral shipping were lost. On December 4 the Admiralty announced the loss of the "Doric Star" (10,086 tons), homeward bound from New Zealand and Australia with meat. Her attacker was a pocket battleship believed at first to have been the "Admiral Scheer," already thought to have claimed two earlier victims (the Booth liner "Clement" on September 30 and a small tanker, "Africa Shell," on November 15). (Later, when the "Admiral Graf Spee" was brought to book and forced to flee into Montevideo harbour, it turned out that she had been masquerading for some time as the "Admiral Scheer," and had sunk nine British vessels. Sixty-one survivors were landed, including the masters of the "Doric Star" and "Africa Shell.") The "Doric Star's" last radio message was the one word "Gunned." The full story of the "Graf Spee" is told in a later chapter.

On December 4, too, the London steamer "Horsted" (1,670 tons) was torpedoed off the East Coast. Three of the crew were killed, two were missing and 13 rescued by a British warship. The Greek steamer "Paralos" (3,934 tons) was sunk in the Thames Estuary on December 6 with three killed and many injured, and the Oslo steamer "Primula" (1,074 tons) was sunk with the loss of all her crew. Six of the crew of the Danish ship "Ove Toft" (2,135 tons) were drowned when the vessel struck a mine on the same day.

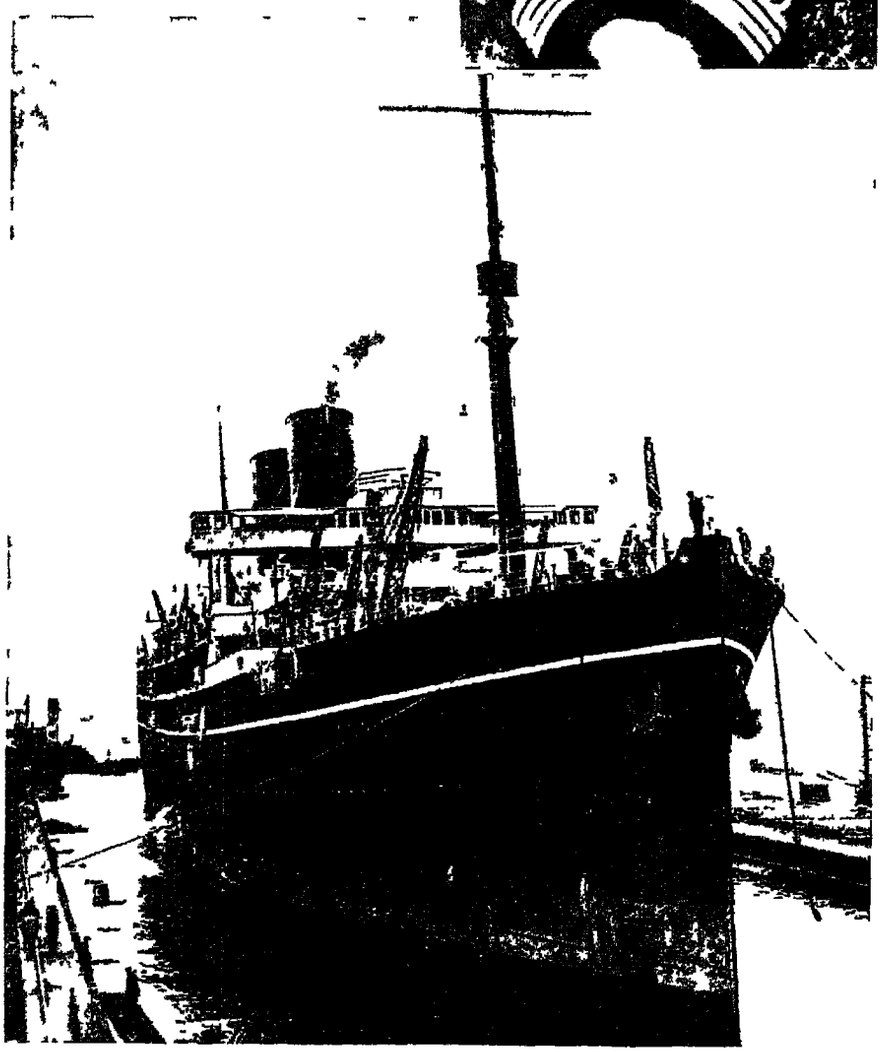
**Brave Ships Sent Below**

On December 7 the Belgian cargo ship "Ionic Shield" (6,057 tons) ran ashore without casualties on the Devonshire coast. She was carrying survivors from the Dutch motor-ship, "Tajandoen" (8,159 tons), torpedoed in the Channel the day before. A West Coast sinking of this date was that of the Norwegian tanker "Britta" (6,214 tons). Of her crew of 31, six were missing. Thirteen men were lost when the British steamer "Thomas Walton" (4,460 tons) was sunk, probably by torpedo, off the coast of Norway on December 7; and on December 8 only two survivors, both injured, of the London cargo steamer "Merel" were picked up after she had struck a mine off the South-East Coast. Her

crew was believed to have numbered 17. A greater tragedy was reported on December 9 in the sinking of the Royal Mail steamer Navasota (5,795 tons) torpedoed in the Atlantic. Many of her crew were sucked under as she foundered and 43 were missing. On the same day it was learned that another British destroyer, H.M.S. Jersey, had been struck by a torpedo on December 7 but had reached port. Two officers and eight ratings were believed to have been killed and ten ratings injured.

This melancholy record was not unrelieved by encouraging news from the British standpoint. During this very week under review at least five German submarines were sunk and although the enemy boasted that their replacements amounted to one submarine a day this was probably a fantastic exaggeration.





**SHIP THAT UPHELD BRITAIN'S PROUD TRADITIONS**

The Rawalpindi' (above) a P. & O. liner of nearly 17,000 tons, was taken over by the Admiralty and converted into an armed merchant cruiser. She was attacked by the German battleship "Deutschland" on Nov. 23, 1939, and fought until she could shoot no more. Top, Captain E. C. Kennedy, Commander of the Rawalpindi, who went down with his ship.

*Photos, Daily Mirror', Planet News*

The exploits of the R.A.F. are dealt with in other chapters of this work, but their contribution to sea warfare was of such vital importance that some mention must be made of it here. For example, on December 4 a strong formation of R.A.F. bombing 'planes attacked German warships in the neighbourhood of Heligoland. Direct hits were obtained on a cruiser and the only enemy fighter encountered (a Messerschmitt) was shot down. The British force sustained no casualties.

In hunting and destroying submarines the R.A.F. machines were invaluable. On the same day as the raid on Heligoland one of the Coastal Patrol sank a U-boat with a single bomb. The pilot approached unobserved through a cloud bank.

**'Plane versus U-Boat**

The U-boat crew, when they heard his engines, made frantic efforts to close the conning tower hatch and to 'crash dive' the submarine, but it was too late. A direct hit was scored on the base of the conning tower, and parts of the submarine were thrown high into the air. A few days later another U-boat was destroyed by direct hits within five minutes of being sighted, and a second was attacked and probably damaged fatally.

During these anxious days the R.A.F. and Fleet Air Arm did much to counter the mine menace by driving off German 'planes suspected of laying these devilish instruments. Also they continued their work of rescue by indicating the position of stranded boats. It is pleasing to recall that the merchant sailors had opportunities of returning these good offices. On one occasion a pilot with engine trouble had landed in the North Sea and was trapped in the gear of the machine. A British trawler came to his rescue and hauled him out of the water.

Another most valuable service rendered by the R.A.F. Coastal Command was the protection and guidance of convoys. There was an occasion at this time when a convoy carrying 100,000 tons of foodstuff had become dispersed because of a threatened submarine attack. Visibility was almost nil, but after searching over a radius of 30 miles an R.A.F. pilot found himself flying over the mastheads of about two-fifths of the convoy. He then discovered the escorting destroyers, and was able to collect the rest of the merchant ships.

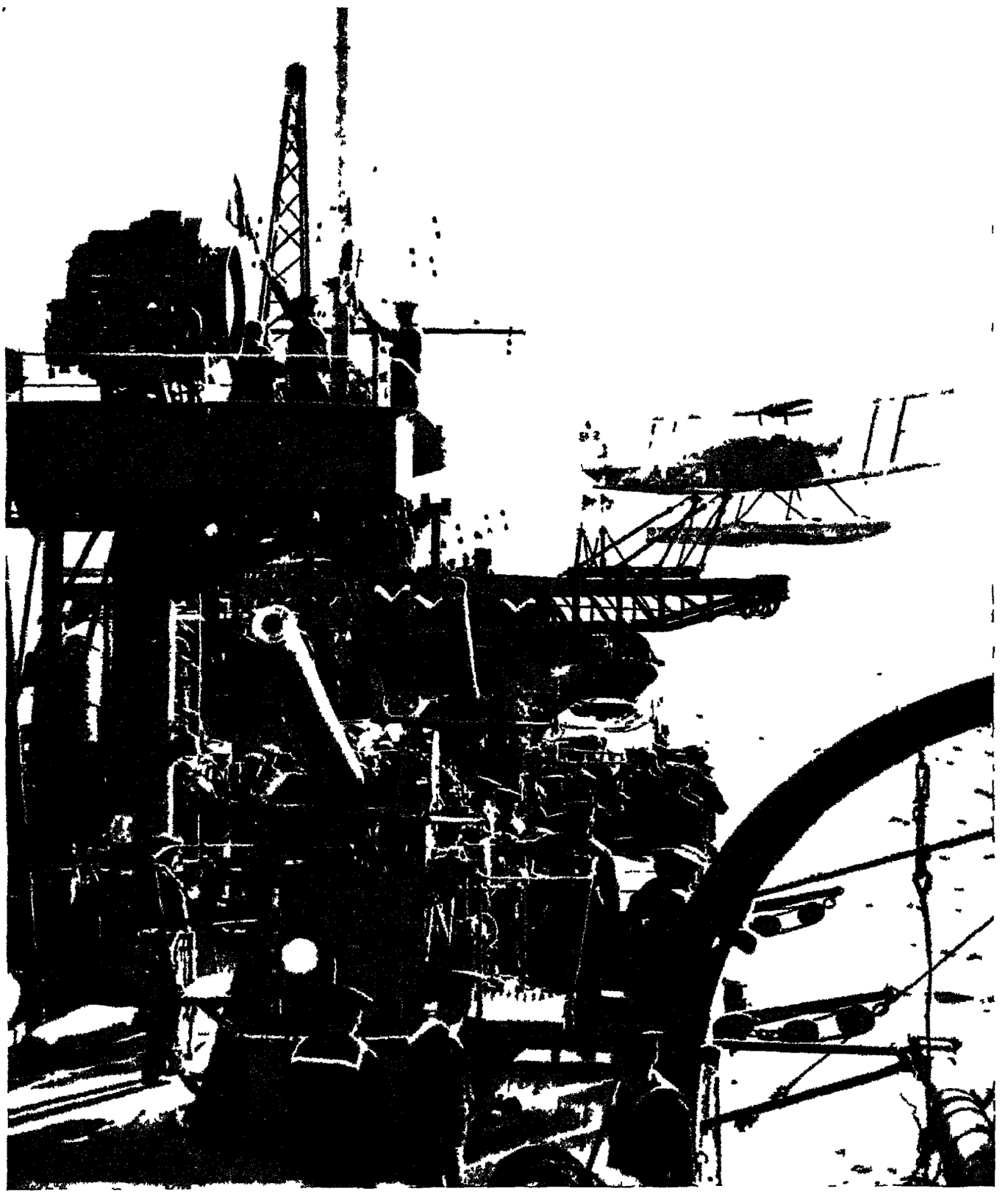
But the main burden of defence lay always with the men and ships of the British Navy, and so magnificently did they keep their trust during this difficult time that they well justified the watchword of the First Lord: "Carry On and Dread Nought!"



GALLANT SURVIVORS OF THE 'RAWALPINDI'

There were very few survivors from the "Rawalpindi" after her heroic fight with the "Deutschland" Eleven men were rescued by the armed merchant cruiser "Chitral," and about thirty were picked up by a German ship Above, some of the survivors being addressed at the Admiralty by Admiral Sir Charles Little (left) In front is P O Percy Harris, behind him stand Able Seaman F. Russell, P.O Frank Simpson, and two others.

*Photo, Fox*



PILOTLESS 'PLANE FOR GUNNERY PRACTICE

Wireless-controlled aircraft provide the Navy with realistic targets for gunnery practice, and, above, such a machine (of the type known as the "Queen Bee") is seen being catapulted from a British cruiser Before launching, the catapult is turned so that the aircraft is pointing into the resultant wind formed by the movement of the ship and the natural wind In this photograph two of the cruiser's anti-aircraft guns are plainly visible.

*Photo, Keystone*